DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 259 732 IR 051 157

| | |
|---|---|
| TITLE | IFLA General Conference, 1984. Collections and Services Division. Sections on Acquisitions and Exchange, Interlending, Rare and Precious Books, and Serials Publications. Papers. |
| INSTITUTION | International Federation of Library Associations, The Hague (Netherlands). |
| PUB DATE | Aug 84 |
| NOTE | 212p.; Papers presented at the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) General Conference (50th, Nairobi, Kenya, August 19-25, 1984). Document contains light, broken type. |
| PUB TYPE | Viewpoints (120) -- Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150) |
| LANGUAGE | English; French |
| EDRS PRICE | MF01/PC09 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | *Developing Nations; Foreign Countries; Interlibrary Loans; International Organizations; International Programs; *Library Acquisition; Library Associations; Library Catalogs; *Library Collections; Library Education; National Libraries; Program Descriptions; Rural Areas; *Rural Population; *Serials; Special Libraries; Union Catalogs |
| IDENTIFIERS | *Africa; Europe (West); Jamaica |

ABSTRACT

Papers on library acquisitions, special collections development, and special training for serials librarianship, presented at the 1984 IFLA general conference, include: (1) "The Development of the African Collection at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and Its Importance for the Cultural History of African Countries" (B. C. Bloomfield, United Kingdom); (2) "Planning Union Catalogues of Books in Developing Countries" (Richard J. Bennett and Maurice B. Line, United Kingdom); (3) "Supply of Literature from and about Africa in Europe with Special Regard to Interlibrary Loan in the Federal Republic of Germany" (Irmstraud D. Wolcke-Renk, West Germany); (4) "Education and Training for Work with Serials" (David P. Woodworth, United Kingdom); (5) "Education for Serials Librarianship: What Are the Basic Components?" (Michael E. D. Koenig, United States); (6) "Serials of the Poor: Their Nature, Importance, Problems, and Suggested Solutions" (Theophilus E. Mlaki, Tanzania); (7) "Acquisition of Library Material in Kenya: Problems and Prospects" (Joshua Reuben Njuguna, Kenya); (8) "Acquisitions in the Developing Countries--Problems and Possible Solutions: The Jamaican Experience" (Stephney W. L. Ferguson, Jamaica); (9) "Theory and Practice of Serials Control and How Your Subscription Agent Can Help" (Arnoud De Kemp, Netherlands); (10) "The British Library's African Research Collections and the Development of African Studies" (I. R. Willison, United Kingdom); (11) "Les Relations d' Echanges entre les Bibliotheques d'Afrique Francophone et la Bibliotheque Nationale de Paris" (Exchange Agreements Between the Libraries of Francophone Africa and the National Library in Paris) (Anne Zundel Ben Khemis); and (12) "The Problems of African Acquisitions: The Experience of the Nairobi Field Office of the Library of Congress" (James C. Armstrong, Kenya). (THC)

IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE NAIROBI 1984

Division:

Section:

160

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☒ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

3-RARE LIBH 1/E

ED259732

# The development of the African collection at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and its importance for the cultural history of African countries

by

B.C. BLOOMFIELD
Director India Office Library and Records
Keeper Department of Oriental Manuscripts & Printed Books
British Library Reference Division
London U.K.

IRO51157

internal use only: SI
be brought to meeting no:
81
be presented orally ☒
distribution only ☐



"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
A.L. Van Wesemael
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ABSTRACT

BLOOMFIELD: The development of the African collection at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and its importance for the cultural history of African countries.

The paper begins with a description of the School of Oriental and African Studies Library today indicating how it is organised and governed. A brief history of the Library and the development of the African collection follows. The paper concludes by attempting to estimate the contribution of the School, its library and the African collection make and have made to African culture and education. There are bibliographical and statistical appendices.

SUMMARY FOR TRANSLATION

BLOOMFIELD: The development of the African collection at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and its importance for the cultural history of African countries.

The School of Oriental and African Studies, now in the University of London, was founded in 1917. Its Library is based on collections from the University of London and the former London Institution library. At first the Director of the School was also the Librarian, but a full-time Librarian was appointed in 1947. The Library developed slowly although many African languages were taught and the School played a great part in the development of Africanist institutions and studies. After the Second World War African studies developed quickly in the United Kingdom as colonial African countries were preparing for independence. The Library grew rapidly from about 7,000 volumes and 150 periodicals to 32,000 volumes and 1,750 periodicals in 1983. There are important collections of missionary archives and literary manuscripts. The collections are made easily available to serious scholars of Africa. Recent financial cuts have reduced the level of acquisitions.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AFRICAN COLLECTION AT THE SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES IN LONDON AND ITS IMPORTANCE FOR THE CULTURAL HISTORY OF AFRICAN COUNTRIES by B.C. BLOOMFIELD

The School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) is an autonomous college of the federal University of London, by any standard the largest single university in the United Kingdom. The School is regulated by a Governing Body consisting of representatives from all walks of life including academic, commercial and government bodies with elected members from the teaching staff of the School. This Governing Body deals with all matters affecting general policy, finance, buildings, staffing etc., but matters of academic policy relating to the University and curriculum are dealt with by the Academic Board and reported to the Governing Body for approval. The Academic Board has a number of sub-committees of which the Library Committee is one of the most important. The Chairman of the Library Committee sits on the Academic Board (as does the Librarian) and is also invited to be present at meetings of the Governing Body's Finance and General Purposes Committee.

The Library Committee is fully representative of the teaching staff in the School and has elected student representatives as well; it also maintains a number of regional advisory sub-committees to advise it on matters relating to the various regions of Asia and Africa. There is a separate regional advisory sub-committee for Africa and the senior member of library staff responsible for Africa sits as its secretary.

SOAS receives most of its annual recurrent budget from the University of London which divides a grant received in turn from the government through the University Grants Committee. Some parts of this grant are occasionally earmarked, or specifically designated, for the School. Very little private or commercial funding is received and SOAS is virtually dependent on the state for survival, although the government has no direct say in setting the School's policy.

SOAS is now one of the largest educational institutions in the world at the tertiary level specialising in the study of Asia and Africa, and although since 1978 the level of state support has been sharply reduced as in other Western countries, there are still some 150 members of academic and academic-related staff, about 1,000 students at undergraduate and post-graduate level, some 40 odd members of library staff and a considerable number of administrative and other staff to support the academic work of the School. While numbers of British students have not noticeably increased, indeed may have fallen, demand for student places from overseas students is still strong in spite of the sharply increased fees such students now have to pay.

But it is with the Library of SOAS that we are principally concerned. This now contains more than 600,000 volumes and other items, 2,695 manuscripts and manuscript collections, about 4,880 current periodicals, together with tapes, discs, films, maps and other forms of recorded information. There are also small collections of photographs, prints, and other materials. The present library accommodation, opened in 1973, is arranged on six floors and has space for about 1 million volumes and seats for 550 readers. The collections are, for the most part, arranged by region, and each major region has near its bookstacks the office of a librarian specialising in that region and a specialist room containing the major reference works relating to that region. The Africa collections are housed on floor D (the first floor) as is the office of the librarian in charge of the collections and the specialist reading room with its reference collections. Works dealing with African art are shelved nearby with the other art collections; works on African law are shelved with the law collections on floor F (lower ground); and works dealing with the Semitic languages of Africa on floor E (Ground) with other Semitic languages. Periodicals from Africa and relating to Africa are shelved with the other serials on floor B (third). It is estimated that the monographic collections relating to Africa now comprise some 32,000 volumes and there are

about 1,750 current serial titles from and about Africa in the library.

There are approximately 2,000 registered readers from the School and the University entitled to use the library and there are also more than 2,200 external registered readers entitled to borrow and another 2,680 readers able to use the library for reference only. The Charter, or governing statute, of the School states in its Article II that "the purposes of the School are to further research in, and to extend the study and knowledge of the Languages of Eastern and African peoples, Ancient and Modern, and the Literature, History, Religion, Law, Customs and Art of those peoples..." The maintenance and development of the library is one of the principal means to this end, and the School has always made its resources generously available to outside scholars and members of the public. (More than 5,300 casual readers were admitted last year to consult books or read in the library). The collections are also made available to distant readers in the United Kingdom and overseas through direct loan or the provision of photocopies, and by request through the British Library Lending Division (BLLD). The SOAS library is recognised as a "para-national" library and is a "back-up" library for the BLLD and its first resort for loan requests in the Oriental and African field. Between 4 and 5 thousand such requests are dealt with every year, although more than 100,000 loans are made to individuals each year.

The library's catalogues, with three later supplements, have been published by the American firm of G.K. Hall & Co. and are widely available throughout the world. The library also publishes a monthly list of accessions, available on subscription and exchange, and there is on sale a substantial Library guide (4th ed. 1980) with a new edition in preparation. Other selective guides and catalogues are published from time to time and micro-reproductions of important manuscript collections have been published and sold commercially.

How has the library developed this important service to African and Orientalist scholarship and, at the same time, built up virtually from nothing

such an important scholarly resource? Two things stand out: first, the library collections have been established in close co-operation with teachers, students and scholars in the School to serve research carried on in the School; and, second, those collections have been freely made available to members of the School and to serious students from outside with the least formality (there were more than 285,090 visits to the library in session 1982/3).

History

Trade and commerce provided the main reasons for the British acquisition of colonial and imperial territories and dominion overseas, with the trading ventures to North America, Asia and the Levant. Business men are traditionally intolerant of theory and any expenditure not strictly devoted to financial return. Thus although by 1800 the British ruled (and had already in some cases lost) huge territories overseas, there was no colonial academy, college or other institution to train those serving overseas to rule or trade. Fort William College founded by the East India Company was not particularly successful, nor were the Company's other ventures in establishing training academies in Britain itself. Any disinterested or scholarly attempts to study the languages and cultures of the areas Britain effectively ruled were like the Asiatic Society of Bengal the bicentenary of which is being celebrated in 1984, the result of private initiatives without the benefit of much interest or support from the state.

During the nineteenth century J.B. Gilchrist, formerly the Principal of Fort William College, opened (in 1818) a London Oriental Institution to teach modern Oriental languages, and, later, Dr Robert Morrison, the celebrated missionary, projected a similar venture in the City of London; both failed. In the new University of London there were Professorships of Hindustani and Chinese and some co-ordination to prevent overlap of teaching, but it was not

until later in the century with the establishment of the Imperial Institute that opinion was again favourable to the idea of an Oriental school. Following a campaign which elicited the support of Professor Max Muller of Oxford, a School of Modern Oriental Languages was formally inaugurated on 11 January 1890. It never really came into existence and remained a paper plan. Nevertheless the University of London revived a proposal to found such a school and presented a memorandum in the name of Professor Rhys Davids to the Royal Asiatic Society and the British Academy in 1905. A deputation to the Prime minister secured a promise of an inter-departmental committee to investigate the idea, and the committee began work under the chairmanship of Lord Reay in 1908. The committee found in favour of establishing a School of Oriental Studies in London; the building and resources of the London Institution were identified as a suitable home; the necessary legislation was passed; and the organising committee issued an appeal for funds in May 1914. It is difficult to imagine a more inimical time to proceed with the foundation of a new academic institution than the beginning of the first World War, but the committee went ahead. Students were admitted on 18 January 1917, and on 23 February 1917 the King Emperor, George V, formally opened the School.

The reports of the Reay Committee and the Cromer Committee (set up to implement Reay's proposals) had made provision for the new School to have a library formed from the books available in University College and King's College. To these were added the books in the Library of the London Institution - a by no means inconsiderable library which with the British Museum and India Office Libraries were the three major libraries accessible to enquirers in London in the middle of the nineteenth century. However the actual total of volumes was small; Lodge estimates "about 300 volumes on oriental subjects from the University General Library, the Morrison Collection (9,371 works) and about 2,000 volumes and pamphlets of Orientalia from University College and about 500 volumes from the Oriental Section of the General Library at King's College."

(These last were almost certainly from the collection of William Marsden, the celebrated Orientalist.) Although courses of language instruction in Hausa and Swahili had for some years past been arranged in King's College the supporting library books were few in number and limited to basic linguistic works. The earliest figures available for the library's stock are quoted by the first Librarian and Director of the School, Sir Edward Denison Ross, in an address to the Library Association in 1920 where he quotes a figure of 9,000 volumes for the whole library - which must relate to those volumes catalogued and on the shelf available to readers, for it is known that the residual collections exceeded that figure. The Library Sub-Committee however, under the Director's chairmanship, was rigorous in only selecting and adding to stock those volumes of proven scholarly worth. Teaching was offered in Swahili (Dr. Alice Werner) and Hausa (Mr. J. Withers Gill) and these courses were, in effect, taken over from King's College; by 1917 Dr. Werner is listed as a Reader (having been promoted) and Amharic (H. Weld-Blundell) was added to the languages offered, as well as Nyanja, Sesuto, Bechuana and Zulu. By the fourth session of the School's existence in 1919-1920 Luganda and Yoruba had been added to the list of languages taught. Dr. Werner also offered from time to time a course of public lectures on "African religions and customs." The 1920s saw the list of languages taught grow longer: in 1920-21 Amharic and Yao; in 1922-23 Ethiopic was offered by the Rev. J. M. Harden and H. Hirschfeld; and the list went on growing. The early prospectuses of the new School included a brief set of library regulations up to session 1924-25 when they were dropped and transferred to the newly issued Calendar of the School, only to be reinstated in session 1930-31.

During these early years the minutes of the Library Sub-Committee make dull reading. Library expenditure in total averaged about £1,500 each year and expenditure on the African section was about £100. Much time and energy was devoted, to the acquisition of standard Orientalist works, but purchases for

the Africa section were restricted to dictionaries, language grammars, and elementary textbooks. Teaching was largely linguistic in character and students, although relatively numerous, were mainly from commercial bodies, missionary institutions and colonial training schemes, rarely studied throughout an entire session, and were mainly occupied in elementary work of a dubious university character. The lack of a recognised body of Africanist scholarship was also a handicap to the newly developing School. In 1920 there were about 49 students studying African languages; in 1922 about 30. But this takes no account of the students studying Arabic, always an African language and always a popular choice. In 1925 there were some 119 students and this number remained fairly constant up to 1940. The Arabic section of the library developed apace, but there was a body of recognised scholarship and bibliographies of books to collect. It is also worth remembering that the various departments in the School had departmental libraries (Prospectus 1917-18, p. 9) and elementary language works were mainly to be found there. Africa however had no department of its own until 1932, and African studies were carried on in the Department of Linguistics. Progress was however steady during the 1920s and the first Conference on African Studies was arranged for 1926. This was the Second International Conference on African Languages under the Chairmanship of Sir Frederick Lugard, and took place on 29-30 June with 32 delegates; one of the principal results was the establishment of the International Bureau for the Study of African Languages in London, the forerunner of the International African Institute. By 1927 nine Bantu languages were taught in the School by the Colonial Office for a special vacation course in African languages and phonetics and the British American Tobacco Company and the Sudan Plantations Syndicate were also sending trainees. In the same year there were 73 Bantu language students, 98 for Arabic and a total of 111 African language students. The major part of the library of the late Rev. W. E. Taylor was purchased and the library of the late Sir Harry Johnston was presented, forming

the basis of the general African collection in European languages. African students were numerically one of the largest groups in the School, but still mainly studying at a low academic level. Professor Alice Werner retired in session 1930 and became a Professor Emeritus when the library stood at 72,000 books and pamphlets. Two years later African studies at SOAS really began to prosper with the foundation of the new Department of Africa; the election of Lord Lugard and Dr. J. H. Oldham to the Governing body; and, most important, the negotiations with the Rockefeller Foundation which led to the annual grant from 1933 until 1938 which supported the team of scholars on work for the Survey of African Languages later published by the International African Institute.

If one looks at the Prospectus for the 19th session at the School among the names of the teaching staff there are E. O. Ashton, G. P. Bargery, Ida C. Ward, A. N. Tucker, Beatrice Honikman, H. J. Melzian and Professor A. Lloyd James as Head of the new Department. Names which continue to be important in the study of African languages for the next 40 years: and three years later in 1936/7 we find Major Hanns Vischer, L. S. B. Leakey, Archdeacon E. S. Daniell, J. B. Danquah and N. A. Fadipe. During this period the number of students of African languages averaged about 70 each year and there was a similar, if not larger number of students of Arabic; these figures represented a major proportion of the total average annual student body of about 400. The Library was spending about £1,000 annually on book purchase and from this total about £100 each year was still devoted to African purchases. (Following the award of the Rockefeller grant the entire cost of African library purchases was borne by the foundation grant up to 1940.) It would be realistic to suppose that this grant would purchase all that the students required for their work and, in addition, there were a large number of donations made by colonial governments and an almost equally large number of simple texts in African languages used for language teaching to be found in the departmental library. One might estimate-

that the African collections in the main and departmental libraries in the School were about 5,000 to 6,000 volumes in all.

The Library itself was housed in the large library room of the original London Institution building and there is an evocative sketch of it published in the Sunday Times newspaper shortly before the building was vacated (17 February 1935). The large high room was arranged with six bays on either side and it was on this arrangement that the Library's shelf classification was based. Each bay was given a roman numeral (for Africa XIII - the extra one!) and each shelf an Arabic number. Books were then arranged by a running number which had pseudo-decimal interpolations. (This system lasted until well into the 1960s when a version of the Decimal Classification was adopted prefixed by alphabetical denominators of region and country.) There was under this system of shelf arrangement no real attempt at subject classification which, considering almost all the library was on open access, was scarcely helpful to readers.

The Library and School continued to prosper in African studies until 1939 and the outbreak of the Second World War. Just prior to that an appeal had been made to colonial African governments for financial support for African studies and most had contracted to give between £500 and £50 each year for that purpose. This was really an attempt by the School to fill the financial gap caused by the ending of the Rockefeller Foundation grant. (Between 1932 and 1939 the School received £18,000 in grant support for African, mainly language, studies.)

In 1940 the School was dispersed; a number of manuscripts were sent to Cambridge, North Wales and other locations to safeguard them in the event of bombing in London. Many students were called to the armed forces and only a few remained as students first in Cambridge and then recalled to London. Most of the School's new building in Bloomsbury to replace the old London Institution building in Finsbury Circus (sold for commercial development) was taken over

by the wartime Ministry of Information and African studies were much reduced. Free French forces however attended classes on Africa without charge and the School, the London School of Economics and the Institute of Education submitted a memorandum to government pleading the cause of co-ordination for colonial studies in London after the war was over. In 1942 the famous name of M. J. Kenyatta first occurs as that of an additional lecturer in the School together with that of Malcolm Guthrie appointed as Senior Lecturer, and there is expanded co-operation between the School and the International African Institute. The following year saw the appointment of a committee under Lord Hailey to report on linguistic needs and colonial development, arising from the joint memorandum submitted previously and many members of Hailey's committee originated from SOAS.

During the early part of the war the Library, or that part of it that was not dispersed, was still accommodated in temporary premises in Clarence House, Westminster. The library's African collections were not dispersed but not all were easily available to readers, kept as they were, in various stores. Book purchases were also sharply reduced and few new publications were issued in Great Britain or sent to London from overseas. 1945 with the end of the European war meant great changes: Lord Hailey retired from the position of Chairman of the Board of Governors, Mrs. E. O. Ashton retired, Beatrice Honikman resigned, Ida Ward became Professor of West African Languages, and, most significant of all, the Scarbrough Committee began to examine post-war needs in the teaching of Slavonic, Asian and African subjects. 1946 brought the first wave of colonial cadets arising from Lord Hailey's committee and for the next five years about 100 "Devonshire" trainees as they were known came to the School for instruction prior to posting in Africa. (After 1950 the numbers sharply reduce and were shared between Oxford and Cambridge.) It also saw the recruitment of W. G. Atkins, J. Berry, E. C. Rowlands and J. H. Nketia to the teaching staff. The publication of the Scarbrough report in 1947 recommended great increases in

teaching and financial support for African studies and the following year the first money made available by the government arrived almost simultaneously with the appointment of R. A. Oliver as lecturer in the tribal history of Africa, the first appointment in African history and one of the first disciplinary appointments outside the purely linguistic field. The Law Department in SOAS began to plan major studies of African customary law and tradition and C. H. Philips visited East Africa to report on adult education. This year also brought the first appointment of a full-time Librarian in the School, Mr. N. C. Sainsbury, who succeeded Dr. L. D. Barnett. Mr. Sainsbury set to work with energy reconstituting and re-arranging the Library after the dispersals and depredations of the war years, but there were few staff, little money and the accommodation was quite insufficient for the Library's needs. Africa and the building of the Africa collections inevitably took a low priority in spite of the large numbers of colonial trainees studying at SOAS - 125 for Africa alone in this particular session. The Director of the School, Sir Ralph Turner, described 1948 as the "annus mirabilis" for the School for, apparently, it was thriving, back in its own building, with ear-marked money from the Scarbrough report, new appointments to the academic staff and students in considerable numbers keenly interested in Oriental and African subjects.

1949 saw the appointments of E. O. J. Wesphal and A. N. Allott; there were 124 colonial service students in training, 297 students of African subjects and 87 students of Arabic; relations were opened with African studies departments in Hamburg and Amsterdam; and the Study Group for the History of Tropical Africa was founded within the History Department. The Library stock exceeded 100,000 volumes and 1,000 manuscripts and manuscript collections, excluding all the departmental library collections. But in 1950 Mr. Sainsbury resigned and was succeeded by J. D. Pearson from Cambridge University Library. The momentum of library growth now increased apace with the increase in African studies in the School. A Deputy Librarian, Mr. R. J. Hoy, was appointed and a steady increase in

library staff numbers began. The total budget of the Library also increased as did the range and number of accessions recorded in the statistics. In 1950 the total number of students for African subjects was 265 from a total of 723, but the library collections for Africa were still small. It was however clear that the Library would soon outgrow its accommodation and plans were then first mooted for an entirely new library building.

In 1951 Professor Malcolm Guthrie became head of the Africa Department and Lord Scarbrough himself became Chairman of the School's Governing Body. A. N.Tucker became Professor and Mr. Seretse Khama an Additional Lecturer in Tswana - another illustrious name in the long list of Africans associated with SOAS. Others retired including Miss M. M. Green, R. C. Abraham and Lord Harlech, but measures were taken to replace them and in 1952 Dr. B. Andrzejewski and Mr. D. W. Arnott were appointed. In the disciplinary field there were first appointments for D. H. Jones and R. A. Hamilton in the fields of West and East African history respectively, and Mr. Musa Galaal is working as an Assistant for Somali. The number of colonial service trainees fell off sharply as a result of a decision in the previous year to share them with Oxford and Cambridge.

1953 is a significant year for the development of African studies for July brought the first Conference on African History. From the early 1950s there was a rapid growth in Africanist scholarship, students and interdisciplinary activities, with linguistic scholarship, in which the School had traditionally been very strong, declining in importance. The recommendations of the International African Conference of 1954 led the British Academy to approach the Secretary of State for the Colonies to recommend the establishment of a one year Certificate in African Customary Law and the draft syllabus was circulated by the Colonial Office to all colonial governors. This was followed by a four week seminar vacation course for Overseas Civil Servants on African law in June 1956. Meanwhile the Library stock had already increased to about 190,000 volumes (almost doubling in six years) and space was becoming a severe

problem. In 1957 the second Conference on African History and Archaeology was held and the Library announced that J. D. Pearson's Index Islamicus was in the press.

The pace of increase in African studies (and in the size and scope of the Library) now became hectic and it is difficult to avoid simply running through a list of names, dates, statistics and significant facts. This will be as brief as possible in an attempt to identify trends which subsequently proved important. New appointments and promotions continued in an apparently unceasing stream and the names of Oliver, Fage, Allott, Read, Boahen, Whiteley, Middleton, Gray, and Cohen figure prominently in these lists; all have proved their worth in Africanist scholarship by research and publications. Colonial service trainees, British and African, now declined almost to a trickle as the number of former African colonial territories achieving independence became in prospect much larger. But it should be remembered that between 1945 and 1960 an estimated 1500 students selected for the overseas colonial service were introduced to the study of Africa at SOAS (and about one third of that number were Africans), while, prior to 1945 the School had, with the financial support of the Rockefeller Foundation, established the largest department in the world for the study of African languages, published many of the first descriptive studies of those languages and texts for teaching them, trained several hundred African students in first and higher degrees to return to their own countries, and given innumerable short courses for training missionaries, bankers, officials and others who wanted for whatever reasons to study Africa. The School had been associated with the foundation of the International African Institute and provided much of its initial impetus and support and had made the first university teaching appointments in African history and law in the UK, sponsoring two conferences on African history and archaeology, establishing the field for investigation, and setting standards.

The Library supported all these initiatives in very difficult conditions, but under the direction of J. D. Pearson every opportunity was taken to increase the book collections and to make them widely available to any serious student who wished to use them. The annual library closure and stock check were abolished in 1952 and fines followed in 1956. A monthly list of accessions was first issued in 1957 and is still produced. A library appeal had been established some years before to secure funds for a new building but had not prospered after a munificent initial donation from the Rockefeller Foundation; meanwhile building costs had soared and it was clear that financial support for Asian and African studies was declining as Britain's imperial and colonial role was vanishing. Professor C. H. Philips had become Director of the School in 1957, following Professor Sir Ralph Turner, and it was in great part owing to his energy that matters were not allowed to stagnate. Academic courses were examined and syllabi changed, experimental courses of multi-disciplinary study were introduced, a positive attempt was made to attract students from the United Kingdom and overseas, advanced study leading to higher degrees was strengthened and emphasised, the publications policy was expanded and every attempt was made to publicize the extent and range of the School's studies, especially in the field of Africa. More international conferences were planned and held (African History and Archaeology in 1961 for example), academic groupings were encouraged (e.g., the International African Law Association in 1960), journals were established (e.g., Modern Asian studies, and the Journal of African Law) and financial support was obtained from outside sources (e.g., the Nuffield Foundation for the Re-Statement of African Law project). This was crowned by the setting-up of the second Committee on Oriental, Slavonic, East European and African Studies (the Hayter Committee) which reported in 1961.

The report gave added impetus to the flagging financial support for these studies and resulted, following its adoption by government, in the award of more

ear-marked grants to those British universities that established special area study centres. SOAS as the principal centre in the United Kingdom was liberally rewarded with academic appointments; student scholarships and money specially dedicated to its library, for the Hayter report was the first to devote an entire chapter to consideration of the library facilities necessary to support any expansion of academic studies. (The chapter is worth study and some supporting data was published afterwards by J. D. Pearson.) The period 1962 to 1978 saw African studies at SOAS at their strongest and most flourishing and the sudden expansion of the Library collections can also be set during that period.

1963 saw the appointment of the first full-time member of the senior Library staff entirely devoted to Africa - M. D. McKee, and from this date one can measure the sharp increase in Library collections and their use. Coincidentally, the same year saw the first chair in African history for Professor R. A. Oliver and the departure of J. D. Fage to Birmingham University for another; E. O. J. Westphal went to a professional chair in Cape Town, and Jack Berry to yet another in Michigan State University. These and other moves over the years illustrate the fertilising influence SOAS has exercised on the development of African studies in the Western world and in Africa itself.

Two years previously the Library Committee learnt that the Librarian was conducting a survey of library collections relating to Africa in London preparatory to a meeting to discuss them at the Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chatham House. This took place in 1961 and led directly to the founding of the Standing Conference on Library Materials on Africa (SCOLMA) in 1962 - an informal association of all those libraries in the UK interested in Africa and possessing significant collections. 1963 saw the first annual meeting of SCOLMA and the announcement of a grant of £2,500 from the Leverhulme Foundation to promote its activities. In all this SOAS Library took a leading part and Pearson, its Librarian, was one of the first Chairman of the organisation.

The Deputy Librarian, Mr. R. J. Hoy, died during 1963 and B. C. Bloomfield was appointed to succeed him in July 1963.

When appointed McKee estimated that the monographic collections relating to Africa stood at about 7,500 volumes; there were perhaps 150 periodical titles and the annual average expenditure on Africanist material was then in the region of £1,200. The linguistics collections were very good and were supplemented by extra copies and many African printed texts in the departmental library, but the general collections on Africa in European languages were very patchy in coverage and almost entirely restricted to the British and former British colonial countries. Books on the other independent or former colonial territories of France, Germany, Portugal and others were very few. Re-classification of the African collections by a home-made scheme had begun in November 1956 and had made good progress in the language collections, but the residue of general Africanist works was still scattered at random throughout the library's stock. There were few manuscript collections, excepting some linguistic vocabularies and the extremely important papers of Sir William Mackinnon presented in 1953 and then still largely unlisted. Prior to McKee's appointment responsibility for book selection in African subjects had been devolved to the academic staff and the cataloguing carried out by a member of library staff responsible for the acquisition of general books.

In 1964 the Library Committee established a series of regional advisory sub-committees representative of the range of teaching interests in the School; one of these sub-committees dealt with Africa. From 1964 McKee, with the advice and help of this sub-committee, whose secretary he was, began to fill in gaps in the African collections, to survey and publicize the resources available, and generally to assume responsibility for book selction, cataloguing and the level of financial resources available. He also undertook in 1967 the first of a series of book buying trips to Africa and especially to those countries for which SOAS had accepted responsibility under the specialisation scheme established

by SCOLMA - Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Mauretania, Ethiopia, Somalia and later, Botswana with Lesotho. Donations and purchases increased substantially: from the United Society for the Propogation of the Gospel; the Universities Mission to Central Africa; surplus books from the International African Institute library and from individuals; the papers of Commander T. Fox-Pitt dealing with Central African affairs, 1945-60 were added; and McKee described the collections in the first of a series of articles in various periodicals. Expenditure on purchases increased by leaps and bounds (1968/9 - £3,880; 1970;1 - £5,000; 1971/2 - £9,000; 1972/3 - £6,600; 1973/4 - £11,150; 1974/5 - £13,000; 1975/6 - £16,000; 1976/7 - £22,800). Collections of printed books and manuscripts were purchased or deposited: the Arkell papers on the Sudan (1968); the Council for World Mission papers (1973) and a number of others.

Meanwhile the exploitation of these rapidly increasing collections was not neglected. Cataloguing and re-classificaiton was increased and McKee acquired an assistant to help his work. Pearson acted as Chairman for the first International Conference on African Bibliography held in Nairobi in 1967 which McKee also attended. McKee took over a good deal of the bibliographical work for the newly planned Cambridge History of Africa and with Bloomfield compiled an elementary bibliography for National Library Week in the UK in 1967. Work had begun some years previously on an index to periodical articles on Africa in academic journals, Index Africanus, with the indexing carried out by J. O. Asamani from Ghana. Work was suspended for a time owing to financial constraints, but in 1969 a grant from the Hoover Institution enabled Asamani to return to the UK to pick up the work and carry it through almost to completion. Again in 1971 the International African Institute approached the School for help and advice and this led in 1972 to the Library's taking over the compilation and editorial work on the International African bibliography now published on its behalf by Mansell. Previously 1969 had seen the first

edition of a substantial Library Guide which contains a description of the African section of the library and a brief guide to the reference bibliography of Africa. (There have been three subsequent editions and another is in preparation.)

In 1972 Pearson became Senior Fellow in Asian and African Bibliography and afterwards Professor, Bloomfield becoming Librarian. The Library moved shortly afterwards into its own purpose-built accommodation and all the collections were re-united under one roof for the first time since the mid-1930s. Steady development and consolidation went on until 1978 when the economic crisis began to bite and expenditure on book purchasing was reduced; Bloomfield resigned and was succeeded by Mr. V. T. H. Parry, previously Librarian of Kew Gardens. Parry had to manage the Library at a difficult time during which the book budget was almost halved and although numbers of acquisitions were not too much reduced there was no scope at all for new initiatives. However the microfiche editions of the various missionary society papers were put in hand, a catalogue of the Macginnon papers produced and various other small projects carried through. But the period under review ended on a slightly sour note as a stock check of the Africa section in 1977 revealed a total of 1,903 items missing. Subsequent investigations reduced this number by 682 items, but in 1983 another stock check revealed the loss of a large number of items specifically relating to Ethiopia and the Amharic languages. This occasioned some comment in the national press and allegations that the loss was deliberate theft over a period of years; the matter is still unclear.

In 1983 Parry resigned to become Librarian of the University of London and was succeeded by Miss Barbara Burton as Librarian at SOAS. McKee opted for early retirement under the scheme promulgated by the government to reduce university spending and the academic staff of the School was reduced very nearly to what it had been twenty years beforehand. However the intervening years had built up a distinguished library collection to serve Africanist scholarship and

its importance cannot be disputed.

It is difficult in the short time available to indicate the value of this resource to Africa. The numbers of Africans trained within the School have already been alluded to, but there have also been a number of library trainees attached to the Schools' Library by universities in Africa mainly through the British Council. There have also been a number of African librarians who have worked for varying periods on the staff of the Library, although the only direct exchange of staff was made between Cape Town University for a period of one year in the 1970s. The Library has collected and made available a great deal of manuscript material which might otherwise have been dispersed and, for example, the collections of missionary papers are of international importance. These papers have, many of them, been photographed and are available commercially in microfiche editions cheaply to scholars all the world over. In 1975 the Library began to collect the manuscripts, typescripts and proofs of books by living African authors, at a time when almost no one else displayed any interest in this area. The collection now contains more than 135 items and when the techniques of descriptive bibliography and textual analysis begin to be applied to African authors scholars will need to turn to the SOAS library as one of their best sources for such material. (There are for instance both typescript and proofs of several works by Ngugi wa Thiongo, Okot p'Bitek and others; and in certain cases the Library has the original manuscript, typescript after editing and corrected proofs.) This will prove an invaluable resource for future scholarship (See Annex 3).

In bibliographical scholarship the Library has through the publication of its Monthly list of accessions and cumulated catalogue made bibliographical data about its accessions available to all, and by a generous policy of inter-library loan (through the British Library Lending Division and direct) and photocopying it has made actual titles easily accessible. The number of outside readers using the Library in person has always been high and continues to remain so.

The number of works published by others that have been compiled within the Library (e.g., Theses on Africa, Index Africanus, Union catalogue of Asian publications that contains much African material relating to North Africa and the Horn of Africa, International African bibliography, and Matthews and Wainwright's A guide to documents and manuscripts in the British Isles relating to Africa) testify to the active bibliographic involvement of the library staff in Africanist scholarship. In addition Pearson, McKee and Bloomfield all served for long periods as officers or committee members of SCOLMA in promoting African bibliography. Pearson for many years taught African bibliography to trainee librarians in the library school at University College London, and also for some years acted as Library Advisor to the Inter-University Council visiting many African university libraries. The contribution of the Library and the School in such matters is on record; no doubt given greater financial support it could have been greater but what was achieved was made readily available to all serious students of Africa wherever they were.

---

Acknowledgements

I acknowledge with grateful thanks the help and assistance I have received in writing this paper from the library staff at SOAS, notably Miss Barbara Burton, the Librarian; Mr. M. D. McKee; Miss R. A. Stevens; Mrs. Rosemary Seton; and Miss Blanche Magnin. Without their help it would not have been possible even to assemble the information on which this paper is based.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary

School of Oriental Studies, London Institution [later School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London]

Report of the Governing Body ... London, the School, 1917 - .

Calendar ... London, the School, 1926 - .

Prospectus ... London, the School, 1916 - 34.

School of Oriental Studies [later School of Oriental and African Studies], University of London. Library Sub-Committee [later Library Committee]

Minutes, 14 December 1917 - . [Typescript, unpublished]

Secondary

African Studies Association of the United Kingdom. African studies in the United Kingdom: papers ... Birmingham, 1965.

Benewick, Anne J. Asian and African collections in British libraries- problems and prospects. [Stevenage], Peter Peregrinus Ltd., [1974].

Bloomfield, B.C. The library of the School of Oriental and African Studies. In: Acquisitions from the Third World ... ed. by D.A. Clarke. London, Mansell, 1975.

----------. The new Library for the School of Oriental and African Studies. In: Middle East studies and libraries ... ed. by B.C. Bloomfield. London, Mansell, 1980. (The volume is a festschrift for J.D. Pearson and contains an account of his work with the IDC.)

Evans, D. Wyn. African studies and British library schools. African research and documentation, 16/17 (1978), pp.12-17.

Harris, C. Method and purpose in African bibliography. African research and documentation, 5/6 (1974), pp.6-7.

International African bibliography. African research and documentation, 22 (1980), pp.24-25.

Lodge, A. The history of the library of the School of Oriental and African Studies. In: University and research library studies, ed. by W.L. Saunders. Oxford, Pergamon Press, 1968.

McKee, M.D. Progress of the SCOLMA Area Specialisation scheme: the acquisition of library material from the Horn of Africa and North Africa by the SOAS library. African research and documentation, 7 (1975), pp.8-10.

----------. The Library of the SOAS. Library materials on Africa, II,3 (January 1965), pp.7-10.

----------. The School of Oriental and African Studies library. African studies bulletin, VIII, 2 (September 1965), pp.92-95.

----------. A visit to Ethiopia and Somalia. Library materials on Africa, VI, 1 (July 1968), pp.31-33.

----------. An acquisition tour in North Africa and Europe. African research and documentation, 21 (1979), pp.2-6.

---------- ----------. The School of Oriental and African Studies library. African research and documentation, 29 (1982), pp.24-25.

Pearson, J.D. Developments [in African bibliography] as seen from the United Kingdom [reported by B.C. Bloomfield]. Library materials on Africa, VIII, 1 (July 1970), pp.9-16.

----------. "The Index Africanus" [reported by B.C. Bloomfield]. Library materials on Africa, VIII, 3 (March 1971), pp.174-76. School of Oriental and African Studies. African studies in London. London, the School, 1976.

----------. The School of Orietal and African Studies...1917-1967, by C.H. Philips. London, the School, [1967].

----------. Centre of African Studies. [Descriptive notes]. Bulletin of the African Studies Association of the U.K., 9 (November 1966), pp.9-12.

----------. ----------. [Descriptive notes]. African research and documentation, 4 (1974), pp.29-30. (A later revision is to be found in no.18 (1978), pp.48-51).

Wynter, J.H. The development of African collections in British learned libraries. African research and documentation, 16/17 (1978), pp.1-11.

ANNEX 3

A SELECTED LIST OF MANUSCRIPTS AND MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS IN THE SOAS LIBRARY

One of the strengths of SOAS Library collection for research purposes is the manuscript resources, mostly acquired recently by gift, deposit and purchase. A select list of some of those collections follows based on information supplied by Mrs Rosemary Seton, the Archivist, whose help is gratefully acknowledged.

Institutional collections

Council for World Mission (incorporating the London Missionary Society. 215 Boxes. Available on microfiche from Inter Documentation Company (IDC).

Methodist Missionary Society. 317 Boxes. Available on microfiche from IDC.

International Missionary Council/Conference of British Missionary Societies (joint archives). 137 Boxes. Available on microfiche from IDC.

Conference of British Missionary Societies. 79 Boxes.

International Committee on Christian Literature for Africa. 61 Boxes.

Handlists are available for some of these collections and introductory descriptive leaflets for others.

Personal collections

Arkell, Reverend Anthony John (1898-1980). 17 Boxes. Mainly concerning the archaeology, history and culture of the Sudan.

Barnes, Leonard (1885-1977). 25 Boxes. Mainly concerned with African political affairs.

Fox-Pitt, Commander Thomas (1897- ). 30 Boxes. Mainly concerned with Central African affairs, 1945-1960, and subsequent correspondence in relation to the Anti-Slavery Society.

Green, Miss Margaret Mackeson (1895-1979). 8 Boxes. Linguistic papers chiefly concerning the Igbo language, 1946-1974. Closed.

ANNEX 2

LIST OF AFRICAN BIBLIOGRAPHIC PUBLICATIONS ORIGINATING FROM THE SOAS LIBRARY

Library catalogue. Boston, G.K. Hall, 1963. 28 volumes.

[First supplement] 1963-68. Boston, 1969. 16 volumes.

[Second supplement] 1968-73. Boston, 1974. 16 volumes.

[Third supplement] 1973-78. Boston, 1979. 19 volumes.

There is a separate subject volume for Africa in each series.

Union Catalogue of Asian publications, ed. by D.E. Hall. London, Mansell, 1971. 4 volumes.

1971 supplement. London, 1973

Includes material on North Africa and the Horn of Africa.

Asamani, J.O. Index Africanus. Stanford, Hoover Institution, 1975.

Bloomfield, B.C. and McKee, M.D. Africa in the contemporary world ... London, National Book League, 1967.

Matthews, N. and Wainwright, M.D. A guide to manuscripts and documents in the British Isles relating to Africa ... London, OUP, 1971.

Pearson, J.D. Index Islamicus ... Cambridge, Heffer, 1958 (and later supplements).

[SOAS] A guide to the papers of Sir William Mackinnon [by A.C. Butler]. London, 1977.

----------. Library guide. London, SOAS, 1969 (plus subsequent editions in 1973, 1976 and 1980).

----------. International African Bibliography. London, Mansell, 1971- Quarterly with annual indexes; plus cumulation.

SCOLMA. Theses on Africa ... [by B.C. Bloomfield, V.J. Bloomfield and J.D. Pearson]. Cambridge, Heffer, 1964.

Holt, Professor Peter Malcolm (1918 - ). 8 Boxes. Mainly concerned with the Sudan and Arabic history.

Mackinnon, Sir William (1823-1893). 147 Boxes. Mainly concerned with African and international economic affairs including the British East Africa Company.

Richards, Charles Granston (1908- ), 10 Boxes. Mainly concerned with his work for the East Africa Literature Bureau, the Christian Literature Fund, and the Agency for Christian Literature Development, 1948-1975.

Literary manuscripts

In addition to these collections there are about 140 literary manuscripts, typescripts, proofs, etc. relating to novels, plays, poems and other literary works by African authors, and this number is increasing every year. It may be useful to list a selected few to illustrate the range and strength of the material available.

Brutus, Dennis. A simple lust. [Unpublished?] Typescript and xerox.

Cook, David and Lee, Miles. Short East African plays. Edited typescript.

Djoleto, S.A.A. Money galore. 1974. Typescript and first proofs.

Iroh, Eddie. 48 guns for the general. 1976. Two sets of proofs.

La Guma, Alex. The time of the butcher bird. 1978. Typescript, setter's copy and two sets of proofs.

Maddy, Yulisa. No past, no present, no future. Edited typescript.

Mandela, Nelson. Against domination. Xerox.

Mulaisho, Dominic C. The tongue of the dumb. 1971. Author's and reader's proofs.

Ngugi wa Thiongo. A grain of wheat. 1972. Edited typescript.

----------. Petals of blood. 1977. Typescript.

Okot p'Bitek. Hare and hornbill. 1978. Typescript and proof.

Ruheni, Mwangi. The Minister's daughter. 1974. Typescript and proofs.

There are also some few examples of the work of Amos Tutuola and Nadine Gordimer to represent the older generation of African writers. A descriptive catalogue of the entire collection would be a valuable contribution to the development of textual studies of African literature.

LECTED LIBRARY STATISTICS, 1917-1983

| | S.O.A.S | | | | LIBRARY | | | | | Library expend. per cap. full-time student | Library % of total expend. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Students[1] | | Staff[2] | Expenditure 3 £ | Expenditure £ | Accessions | Loans | Staff Nos. | Stock[4] | | |
| | Part Time | Full Time | | | | | | | | | |
| | 85 | 40 | - | 8,134 | 873 | - | - | - | - | 21.8 | 10.7 |
| 8 | - | - | 29 | 11,990 | 1,032 | - | - | - | - | - | 8.5 |
| 9 | - | - | 27 | 13,039 | 1,384 | 803 | 743 | - | - | - | 10.6 |
| 0 | 484 | 55 | 28 | 14,593 | 1,591 | 1,410 | 1,198 | - | [9,000][5] | 29.0 | 10.9 |
| 1 | 320 | 92 | 30 | 20,089 | 1,810 | 1,700 | 1,498 | - | - | 19.9 | 9.0 |
| 2 | 358 | 100 | 33 | 22,668 | 2,044 | - | - | 4½ | - | 20.4 | 9.0 |
| 3 | 318 | 85 | 34 | 21,771 | 1,829 | - | - | - | - | 21.5 | 8.4 |
| 4 | 295 | 80 | 32 | 21,748 | 1,576 | 1,150 | - | 5½ | - | 19.7 | 7.2 |
| 5 | 366 | 92 | 31 | 23,603 | 1,857 | - | - | - | - | 20.1 | 7.8 |
| 6 | 338 | 92 | 36 | 24,628 | 1,964 | - | - | - | 62,534[6] | 21.3 | 7.9 |
| 7 | 407 | 121 | 35 | 26,273 | 1,829 | - | - | - | - | 15.1 | 6.9 |
| 8 | 482 | 129 | 35 | 26,327 | 1,865 | - | - | - | - | 14.4 | 7.0 |
| 9 | 397 | 197 | 39 | 27,730 | 1,883 | 1,289 | - | - | - | 9.5 | 6.7 |
| 0 | 470 | 82 | 38 | 30,787 | 2,070 | 1,197 | - | - | - | 25.2 | 6.7 |
| 1 | 420 | 83 | 39 | 29,073 | 2,218 | 1,361 | - | - | 72,000 | 26.7 | 7.6 |
| 2 | 340 | 76 | 40 | 29,438 | 2,043 | 1,307 | 2,629[6] | - | - | 26.8 | 6.9 |
| 3 | 320 | 73 | 43 | 28,439 | 2,106 | 1,339 | - | - | - | 28.8 | 7.4 |
| 4 | 362 | 73 | 43 | 28,291 | 2,034 | 1,435 | - | 4½ | - | 27.8 | 7.2 |
| 5 | 352 | 72 | 44 | 31,428 | 2,438 | 1,555 | - | - | - | 33.8 | 7.7 |
| 6 | 379 | 70 | 54 | 34,327 | 2,423 | 1,415 | - | 6½ | - | 34.6 | 7.0 |
| 7 | 332 | 96 | 56 | 38,056 | 2,522 | 2,938 | - | 6½ | - | 26.2 | 6.6 |
| 8 | 364 | 85 | 59(43) | 37,892 | 2,633 | 2,096 | - | 5½ | - | 30.9 | 6.9 |
| 9 | 341 | 74 | 68(42) | 39,812 | 2,676 | 2,384 | - | 5½ | 84,250 | 36.1 | 6.7 |
| 0 | 351 | 62 | 67 | 37,215 | 1,906 | 2,925 | - | 4½ | 89,835 | 30.7 | 5.1 |
| 1 | 315 | 26 | 65 | 32,372 | 1,537 | 1,932 | - | 3½ | 90,761 | 59.6 | 4.7 |
| 2 | 563 | 96 | 64 | 39,305 | 1,672 | 2,008 | - | 3½ | 91,874 | 17.4 | 4.2 |
| 3 | 408 | 296 | 66 | 47,558 | 1,852 | 2,142 | - | 3½ | 93,215 | 6.2 | 3.9 |
| 4 | 608 | 350 | 64 | 55,164 | 2,250 | 909 | - | 4½ | 93,890 | 6.4 | 4.0 |
| | 463 | 423 | 75(76) | 70,226 | 2,635 | 1,316 | - | 4½ | 94,520 | 6.2 | 3.7 |
| | 674 | 354 | 75 | 91,479 | 3,079 | 1,040 | - | 5½ | 95,540 | 8.7 | 3.3 |
| | 687 | 251 | 69(62) | 110,309 | 4,787 | 1,649 | - | 6½ | 97,186 | 19.0 | 4.3 |
| 8 | 631 | 203 | " - | 148,446 | 7,306 | 2,434 | - | 10 | 99,960 | 36.0 | 4.9 |
| 9 | 571 | 206 | " - | 189,063 | 8,764 | 2,961 | - | 10 | 101,000 | 42.5 | 4.6 |

se figures are not reliable until c.1930

res in parentheses are supplied by Miss M.D. Wainwright

luding transfers to the general reserves

Director was counted as one half a member of the Library staff

rary Association Record (1921) pp. 72-80

catistics kept by Miss O. Murray Browne

| S.O.A.S. | | | | LIBRARY | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Students | | Staff | Expenditure £ | Expenditure £ | Accessions | Loans Nos | Staff | Stock | Library expend. per cap. full-time student | Library % of total expend. |
| Part time | Full time | | | | | | | | | |
| 300 | 223 | - | 225,683 | 14,985 | 7,810 | - | 17 | - | 67.2 | 6.6 |
| 438 | 218 | - | 245,079 | 18,763 | 9,212 | 13,170 | 19 | - | 86.0 | 7.6 |
| 418 | 220 | (136) | 264,176 | 18,776 | 8,862 | 10,344 | 19 | 157,813 | 85.3 | 7.1 |
| 414 | 254 | - | 277,609 | 19,725 | 6,866 | 19,520 | 20 | - | 77.6 | 7.1 |
| 420 | 266 | - | 286,107 | 20,271 | 7,537 | 22,393 | 20 | 180,336 | 76.2 | 7.0 |
| 347 | 272 | - | 315,268 | 22,891 | 6,372 | 21,276 | 20 | 186,768 | 84.1 | 7.2 |
| 363 | 259 | - | 338,994 | 24,110 | 6,359 | 22,435 | 22 | 195,647 | 93.0 | 7.1 |
| 303 | 266 | - | 336,895 | 25,899 | 7,202 | 21,300 | 23 | 204,297 | 97.0 | 7.6 |
| 334 | 257 | (142) | 414,125 | 28,871 | 5,816 | 16,827 | 25 | 213,163 | 112.3 | 6.9 |
| 341 | 304 | - | 431,301 | 29,071 | 5,740 | 19,355 | 25 | 220,883 | 95.6 | 6.7 |
| 357 | 335 | (155) | 482,027 | 34,191 | 6,358 | 25,575 | 24 | 228,735 | 102.0 | 7.0 |
| 443 | 412 | (151) | 541,667 | 35,663 | 6,029 | 23,526 | 24 | 235,978 | 86.5 | 6.5 |
| 302 | 485 | - | 565,070 | 40,122 | 5,392 | 27,549 | 26 | 243,145 | 82.7 | 7.1 |
| 294 | 509 | - | 637,706 | 46,162 | 8,323 | 32,788 | 26 | 251,448 | 90.7 | 7.2 |
| 265 | 497 | - | 739,310 | 53,822 | 12,038 | 42,077 | 28 | 263,505 | 108.2 | 7.2 |
| 286 | 489 | - | 848,917 | 58,730 | 11,872 | 48,644 | 29 | 275,378 | 120.1 | 6.9 |
| 275 | 551 | - | 929,871 | 64,432 | 9,411 | 46,096 | 30 | 284,789 | 116.9 | 6.9 |
| 218 | 592 | - | 995,682 | 71,887 | 8,881 | 51,197 | 31 | 293,670 | 121.4 | 7.2 |
| 304 | 638 | - | 1,104,654 | 83,246 | 12,952 | 52,724 | 35 | 306,589 | 130.4 | 7.5 |
| 280 | 724 | - | 1,192,573 | 96,548 | 17,163 | 58,639 | 35 | 321,752 | 133.3 | 8.0 |
| 265 | 736 | (230) | 1,321,321 | 118,101 | 13,887 | 53,827 | 35 | 337,639 | 160.4 | 8.9 |
| 251 | 768 | (221) | 1,525,000 | 148,980 | 11,810 | 72,773 | 37 | 349,449 | 194.0 | 9.7 |
| 275 | 698 | - | 1,742,330 | 205,713 | 14,104 | 68,248 | 37 | 363,553 | 294.7 | 11.8 |
| 273 | 657 | - | 1,960,919 | 202,926 | 14,479 | 57,198 | - | 379,869 | 308.9 | 10.3 |
| 323 | 669 | (215) | 2,198,376 | 242,913 | 19,026 | 49,507 | 46 | 398,895 | 363.0 | 11.0 |
| 345 | 811 | - | 2,668,025 | 292,941 | 19,445 | 75,065 | 46 | 418,349 | 361.1 | 10.9 |
| 352 | 792 | - | 3,318,087 | 372,276 | 18,592 | 86,387 | 46 | 436,932 | 470.0 | 11.2 |
| 360 | 799 | - | 3,691,269 | 420,267 | 19,341 | 95,898 | 46 | 456,273 | 525.9 | 11.3 |
| 451 | 755 | - | 3,908,220 | 431,563 | 17,761 | 103,149 | 46 | 474,034 | 611.6 | 8.24 |
| 386 | 788 | - | 4,265,633 | 513,572 | 18,285 | 106,190 | 46 | 521,983 | 651.7 | 8.17 |
| 440 | 758 | - | 5,368,619 | 658,837 | 19,362 | 119,733 | 47 | 543,339 | 869.2 | 9.88 |
| 460 | 722 | (204) | 6,319,817 | 636,837 | 18,178 | 105,609 | 46 | 565,318 | 881.7 | 9.92 |
| 446 | 645 | - | 6,312,469 | 595,521 | 16,743 | 100,628 | 45 | 589,052 | 923.2 | 10.59 |
| 558 | 724 | (178) | 6,653,774 | 767,514 | 13,161 | 101,956 | 44 | 605,244 | 1060.1 | 8.66 |

usted figure

om this year the system adopted for counting students is that used by the U.G.C., and presents student numbers at December, not at the end of the session.



Bloomfield
il 1984

LIBRARIANS OF THE SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL & AFRICAN STUDIES

The post of Director and Librarian were originally held jointly by the first two Directors of SOAS

Sir Edward Denison Ross. Director and Librarian, 1916-1937

Sir Ralph Turner. Director (1937-1957) and Librarian, 1937-1940

Dr L.D. Barnett (part-time). Librarian, 1940-1947

Mr N.C. Sainsbury. Librarian, 1947-1950

Professor J.D. Pearson. Librarian, 1950-1972

Mr B.C. Bloomfield. Librarian, 1972-1978

Mr V.T.H. Parry. Librarian, 1978-1983

Miss B. Burton. Librarian, 1983 - to date

IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE, NAIROBI 1984

Division: Collection and Services

Section: Interlending

1984

17-IL-2-E

# Planning Union Catalogues of Books in Developing Countries

by

Richard J. BENNETT
Assistant, IFLA Office for International Lending
Maurice B. LINE
Director, IFLA Office for International Lending
British Library Lending Division
Boston Spa, UK

*For internal use only:* S1

To be brought to meeting no: 130

Remarks:

to be presented orally [X]

for distribution only [ ]

## Introduction

Libraries in developing countries tend to be relatively few, and poorly stocked and funded. As a result self-sufficiency in individual libraries is even lower than in developed countries, and access to material held in other libraries is therefore vital if the information needs of the country are to be met at all adequately.

The accepted means of making documents available to all users is by inter-library lending. In a study carried out for Unesco on national interlending systems[1] two models for developing countries are proposed; both of them include the establishment of one or more core collections of most-requested serials and high-demand monographs, supported by back-up facilities, which include access to other libraries' collections via union catalogues. Although limited central collections could be justified in many developing countries, the amount of money needed to set them up makes it inevitable that union catalogues, despite their inherent disadvantages and problems, will remain the main means of wider access in the near and medium future.

This paper is concerned with the planning of union catalogues with special reference to developing countries, although many of the points made apply equally to developed countries. It is limited to books (monographs); rather different considerations apply to periodicals, which would require a separate paper. Nor does this paper deal with the procedures for making and handling requests; these are dealt with thoroughly in the Unesco report on national interlending systems (chap. 9).[1]

## Requirements of union catalogues

Since union catalogues do and will exist, they should be as well designed as possible. The world is littered with the torsos of half-grown and decayed union catalogues, on which much money and

human effort have been spent. Good pre-natal planning can help to ensure a long and healthy life for a union catalogue.

It is important to see what is feasible within the existing library and financial climate of a given country. Over-ambitious schemes and schemes that, even if well designed, have not been accurately costed, are likely to fail; it is far better to establish a modest but efficient union catalogue that can be expanded and developed later.

The danger of trying to combine more than one function in one catalogue should be avoided. A union catalogue is often viewed as a potential tool for a locations service, a national bibliographic inquiry service and a national cataloguing service. As the level of stock duplication in libraries in developing countries will usually be very low, the chances that a given library will find an entry in the union catalogue to match a newly acquired book will also be low. The fact that the total collections in the country are not extensive would make it a poor bibliographic tool. Multiple functions complicate the design and increase the cost, whereas if a union catalogue is designed specifically for locating books for interlending purposes it can play an effective and important role.

The main characteristics that should be aimed at in any union catalogue for interlending can be summed up as simplicity, economy, accessibility, up-to-dateness and ease of use. Union catalogues should be as simple as possible in their construction, maintenance and use. They must be reliable; they should be as widely accessible as possible; and they should aim to provide access to the holdings of an optimum selection of libraries. Since the main justification for their existence, as compared with the establishment of central collections, is that they cost less, they must be designed for maximum cost-effectiveness.

Up-to-dateness is vital. Holdings information must be notified to the union catalogue promptly, and be incorporated into the

catalogue quickly. If the catalogue is to be published, publication should be both speedy and as frequent as possible. Withdrawals or losses of books must also be notified and acted upon.

Union catalogues are heavily dependent upon the voluntary cooperation of their participants over a long period of time. Consistency of coverage must be maintained, and this requires continuing commitment on their part. Without consistency union catalogues can quickly become unreliable, with many 'dead' entries and the absence of many important ones. Once libraries cease to trust a union catalogue, they may continue to use it but their confidence in it will gradually be eroded - and this can then affect the willingness of libraries to contribute entries to it.

## Planning

A major consideration in planning a union catalogue is cost. Initial costs derive from the setting up of the catalogue, including the cost of basic equipment (cabinets, stationery etc), and accommodation. Account must also be taken of recurring costs, and planning should include provision for such items as rents, services (electricity, telecommunications, postage etc), salaries, and publication and printing costs (if appropriate), making some allowance for inflation or currency fluctuations. If publication on a regular basis is intended, a decision should be made whether to sell copies to libraries and thus enable some costs to be recovered. The total costs of union catalogues, if estimated accurately, can be very large. In practice, some of the costs will be hidden, especially staff costs, since the staff in question may be employed anyway and only a part of their time may be devoted to union catalogues. Care should also be taken to determine in advance where funds might be obtained, and, in particular, to ensure a continuing supply of such funds.

Union catalogues must also be kept within the bounds of manageability. These, which will be determined by the funding and

staffing available, will affect the number of libraries included and the subsequent size and coverage of the catalogue. Planning must also take account of future growth in the number of entries and requests submitted.

Conditions in a given country may dictate whether there is one national union catalogue or several smaller ones. The latter may cater for different subject areas, different geographical areas within the country, different languages or scripts, or different types of library. There may be various reasons for the existence of a range of catalogues, such as different ministerial responsibility for different kinds of library, enthusiastic librarians who have constructed special catalogues for their own geographical areas or types of library, or special earmarked funding, perhaps from an international body. Such special features may change or be short-lived: enthusiastic librarians do not live for ever, ministerial responsibilities may shift, and funds or grants usually have a limited life. Adequate provision must therefore be made for the continuation of catalogues.

Divided or multiple union catalogues make life much harder both for contributors and users, even if they are consistent among themselves. As a general rule, the fewer union catalogues there are the better; the ideal is a single union catalogue. As Buckland has shown, a system of multiple union catalogues is both more expensive and harder to control than a single union catalogue.[2] Compiling and editing several union catalogues will necessarily be more expensive than a single union catalogue for the same number of locations. Total staff time in filing and searching, overhead costs and delays to the user can all be minimized by a single catalogue.

Planning should therefore aim towards a single national union catalogue, even if this cannot be achieved in the short term. Nevertheless, it is better to have several good limited catalogues than a single national union catalogue that is poorly maintained

or that, because of an over-ambitious programme, withers and dies after a short time. At all events, wherever separate union catalogues do exist they should be planned to be compatible, especially in the format of entries, so that at an appropriate time they can be easily combined. Otherwise, if and when a larger union catalogue is required it has to be started from scratch, and much of the effort that has gone into the smaller catalogues is wasted.

For all these criteria to be met, it must be decided where responsibility for planning is to be vested. The interests of efficiency and of appropriate allocation of funds are best served by an executive body, aided by an advisory committee if required. This can avoid the conflicts, prejudices and indecisiveness that can occur in a planning committee, which may consist of librarians with their own interests to protect. If, as suggested later, the national library maintains the main union catalogue, it can also take responsibility for total planning, which can also be more easily integgated into a national library plan.

Coverage of union catalogues

In accordance with the objective of IFLA's Universal Availability of Publications programme of the widest possible availability of publications to users,[3] a union catalogue or system of union catalogues should if possible cover the whole range of publications required by users. This may nevertheless be impossible as a first objective; a start should be made somewhere, and the conditions in an individual country may suggest union catalogues in limited subject areas vital to the country's development, such as medicine or agriculture, or for a particular sector of libraries, for example university libraries, where the bulk of the country's library stocks may be held. Such limited union catalogues can fulfil a useful purpose, but they are only a partial solution to the problem of accessibility, and efforts should be made at the earliest opportunity to incorporate such separate catalogues into a comprehensive national catalogue.

In an earlier paper[4] it was stated that, while in some developed countries national imprints may supply the bulk of users' needs, in developing countries far greater reliance has to be placed on publications from industrialized countries. Foreign publications must obviously be covered by the union catalogue, since the need for these will generally be greatest and the maximum use must be made of the works, perhaps relatively few, that libraries have been able to acquire. On the other hand, although the number of national imprints of a given country may be small, they need to be made available, as many of them may not be held elsewhere in the world, and in any case the country of publication is the most obvious source of supply. If there is no central loan collection of them (for example in the National Library), they should be included in the union catalogue. The level of material to be included should be determined by the needs of users, who may want fiction or children's literature as much as scientific works.

**Selection of contributing libraries**

A specialized catalogue will include, and probably concentrate on, the holdings of specialist libraries, but notifications of strong collections in the subject in question in other more general libraries would also be desirable. A general catalogue on the other hand would have as a basis the holdings of larger libraries, which provide the largest number and widest spectrum of publications, and supplement them with smaller research and special libraries which will contain additional items. Academic libraries are generally of greater value than public libraries, partly because the holdings of the latter are more subject to change, partly because they will between them probably have a larger number and wider range of books, including many important for national, economic and technical development.

Regardless of the value or size of the collection of a particular library, a major criterion in deciding whether to include a library in a union catalogue is its ability and willingness to

supply items on inter-library loan. Unless the union catalogue is also to be used as a bibliographic reference or cataloguing tool there is little advantage to be gained from including the holdings of a library which will not lend them, since a personal visit to the holding library is not often a practical option.

Comprehensiveness of coverage may appear to be an ideal, but the belief that "the more libraries included in the union catalogue, the more comprehensive the catalogue" is false, as shown by Arms.[5] The aim should be an optimum number of libraries that between them can supply an optimum percentage of books in the country. Arms' study took representative national university, public and specialist libraries in Britain and considered the level of duplication of their holdings and the percentage of unique items contributed by each. From this he was able to show that "once a large number of libraries have been included in the catalogue, the proportion of new entries which are unique approaches an asymptotic level below which it does not drop. When the holdings of further libraries are added there is a law of diminishing returns".[6] Thus, if additional libraries add n% to total coverage and c% to total cost, beyond a certain point c exceeds n to an unacceptable degree. Furthermore, Arms showed that union catalogues should not necessarily include the largest libraries, but those that have a high percentage of unique items (which may be determined by sample surveys). In developing countries particularly, where money is likely to be short, careful selection of libraries for optimum accessibility becomes imperative.

It might nevertheless be supposed that even if beyond a certain point additional libraries yield less and less additional material, the inclusion of their holdings will still lead to a larger number of separate items. In practice, this is unlikely to happen. If 10 or 20 libraries contribute, it is possible to ensure that they are conscientious; backsliders can be identified and pursued. Identification and pursuit of backsliders becomes more and more difficult as more libraries contribute, until a

point is reached where effective control becomes impossible. The result is that many cease to contribute, or contribute only partially and spasmodically, probably including some very important libraries; and the union catalogue ends up by having fewer entries than it would have if it concentrated on a limited number of carefully selected contributors. The point where control is lost depends on a number of factors; an automated catalogue, with direct input of entries in machine-readable form, can cope with many more than a manual catalogue, where even 30 or 40 libraries can give rise to problems of control.

**Form of entry**

The form that entries in the union catalogue should take depends upon the intended use of the catalogue. If it is to be used also as a bibliographic or cataloguing tool, then the entries will of necessity be extensive, and aim to be complete and accurate. The cross-references that will be necessary will only increase the size and decrease the manageability of the catalogue; staff time will increase as entries from contributing libraries are made to conform to the established standard, and as inter-library loan requests are searched for in a large and complicated catalogue. The liability to error is also likely to grow.

The requirement for entries in a union catalogue that is to be used only for interlending purposes are much simpler. The basic requirement is for entry under author and title, with date and edition providing supplementary aids to identification where necessary. For a union catalogue on cards, the Berghoeffer system has advantages. In this system a standard spelling of the last name of the author provides the main access point, and first names and initials disregarded in filing. Titles of works by all authors with that name, or with a variant spelling of the same or a similar name, are filed alphabetically in one sequence. (eg Maier, Mayer, Mayere, Mayers, Mayr, Meier, Meyer or Meyers). This creates savings in staff time and effort in both filing and

searching. The imprecision in the filing order can actually improve the success rate in searching, since imperfect references can be traced more easily. Berghoeffer filing fulfils the criteria of simplicity, economy and ease of control and use, but it is not suitable except in an interlending centre where the staff become thoroughly familiar with it, and it can cause problems if the catalogue is later automated.

Entries also need to include the locations of libraries holding each item. It is convenient to code this information, and to this end a national standard system of library codes, preferably with some mnemonic element, should be devised; it may well prove useful for other purposes (eg for booksellers), and it is clearly better to have a single set of codes than several. The list of codes should be published so that locations can be notified easily to requesting libraries, for example by adding codes to forms.

Form of catalogue

Union catalogues can be on cards, in microform, or on-line; with any of these three alternatives a published version may also be produced for distribution to user libraries. The factors governing the choice of format are mainly financial ones, although in developing countries poor electricity and telecommunications services and lack of equipment and trained personnel may favour a card catalogue.

The card catalogue offers the most flexibility. It is easy to use, needing no special equipment for filing and searching; it is simple in concept and design; it is cheap to maintain, costs being restricted to basic stationery and cabinets, staffing and housing costs; and it is easy to control. Notifications by contributors are easily standardized to a given format and size (most libraries in developing countries use card catalogues and it is not difficult to produce extra cards). A card catalogue can be converted, though at a cost, to one of the other formats at a

later date, if required, and it thus forms a suitable starting point for a longer term plan. Its disadvantages include the physical space required; and size - once a card catalogue has reached a certain number of entries it takes more time and effort to use. Access points per entry are generally limited to one or two. Publication is not impossible - several card catalogues have been printed, whether by typesetting or photographic reproduction of cards, in recent years - but it is likely to be very expensive; high standards of entries are desirable, and proof reading and checking are costly in staff time. Means of regular but economic updating must also be sought; printed catalogues in several sequences are cumbersome to use and increase the burden of checking.

A union catalogue on roll microfilm or microfiche occupies little space. Its contents can be reproduced catalogue cards or purpose-designed entries. Updates can be cheaply and quickly made, and published and sold quite cheaply. Microform does however need special reading equipment, which requires maintenance. Indexes to the contents of individual microfiches or rolls of film must be created. Its use may be less convenient for staff. Doubts have also been expressed about the durability of microfilm, especially in extreme climates.

A particularly economical form of microform union catalogue is one where notifications are translated into the ISBNs and recorded simply as numbers. There are successful examples of ISBN union lists in South Africa[7] and, the UK.[8] A major disadvantage is the need to find out the ISBN before the catalogue can be checked. Many books do not receive an ISBN - this is especially likely to be true of books published in developing countries - and separate means (artificial numbers which can be incorporated, or separate conventional catalogues) are needed for such material.

Both card and microform catalogues can be produced from computer records, but they do not offer the flexibility provided by an

on-line union catalogue. Catalogue entries and locations can be fed direct into the catalogue, and access can be gained to any part of the catalogue rapidly at a single work station, through any one or a combination of several access points: author, title, corporate author, ISBN, as well as truncated forms and possibly keywords in the title, which can compensate for imprecise references etc. An on-line catalogue occupies little space. Printouts on paper or computer output microform (COM) can be quickly and frequently produced. Disadvantages include reliance on a constant electricity supply, and on specialist staff to program, run and maintain the system. Some of its most valuable features are lost if contributing libraries do not have automated catalogues themselves, since they then have to send in cards or other 'hard' entries which then have to be keyboarded. On-line systems may need to be bought in by developing countries; this raises problems of currency exchange as well as of maintenance. Furthermore, technology is advancing at such a rate that, even when a developing country can afford to set up an on-line system, it is in danger of being left with an obsolescent system.

Publication of union catalogues

Publication of a union catalogue may seem highly desirable; it makes the contents more widely accessible and should cut down delays in supply by enabling libraries to apply direct to the holding library. This may be achieved at first, but uncontrolled access to locations information tends to lead to an excessive demand on a small number of initially efficient libraries, allowing 'lazy' libraries to relax even further. It is almost impossible to monitor demand with published catalogues, so that areas of poor national provision cannot be identified and remedied. Libraries facing a great burden of demand may become reluctant to contribute to the union catalogue, which then becomes less and less reliable. Publication should not therefore be contemplated unless there is a fair assurance that these factors can be controlled. If handling of requests is concentrated in the

centre where the union catalogue is maintained, then control of notifications, the equitable distribution of demand over all contributing libraries and monitoring of performance and provision can be achieved.

Location of union catalogues

If a country opts for a system of separate union catalogues these may be housed in several different libraries. Distributed location raises questions of finance for the libraries concerned, of the incentive for them to continue the union catalogues committed to their charge, and of overall control and compatibility. If there is to be a single national union catalogue then the ideal location is in the national interlending centre if one exists. This may be the national library, or, albeit unlikely in a developing country, a dedicated national interlending centre. One advantage of housing the union catalogue in the national library or a special national centre is the existence of a collection upon which the union catalogue can be based, provided this stock can be lent; there is also some assurance of continuity and possibly of government involvement. Locating union catalogues in a national centre also makes for better control and management; a national centre is in a position to coordinate interlending and to incorporate the union catalogue or catalogues into the national interlending system. Wherever union catalogues are housed they must be staffed with suitably qualified personnel, and a range of bibliographies must be available for verifying requests.

The location of union catalogues in a single centre facilitates the collection of performance statistics, which will serve as a measure of the success or failure of the catalogues. Figures should be gathered for the number of notifications received; the number of duplicate and unique entries received - the number of requests received, those satisfied and those unsatisfied; and the number of requests satisfied in given subject areas. Such data can help to determine whether the union catalogue has the right

balance of contributing libraries, and it can also highlight areas of inadequate provision and so aid the development of a coordinated national acquisitions policy.

## Conclusion

Many factors influence decisions on the desirability of union catalogues and their subsequent creation. The overriding need is planning. It is not sufficient merely to leave union catalogues to well-intentioned librarians who have neither the resources nor the opportunity to complete and maintain them or to integrate them with other union catalogues, and who in any case will not always be there. When separate union catalogues do exist or where only one geographical area, sector or subject is covered initially, the ultimate aim should be integration into a single national union catalogue, and they should be designed with this in mind. The union catalogue of the future will surely be an on-line catalogue, and planning and design must take this into account.

Finally, it must be stressed that union catalogues, however well planned, cannot compensate for poor collections, poor management, poor postal systems and delays in supply. In the development of an efficient national library system they form one element only, albeit a very important one.

## References


1. Line, Maurice B. and others. National interlending systems: a comparative study of existing systems and possible models. Paris, Unesco, 1980 (PGI/78/WS/24 Rev.) p122-124.

2. Buckland, M.K. The quantitative evaluation of regional union catalogues. Journal of Documentation, 1967, 23 (1), p20-27.

3. Vickers, Stephen C.J. and Line, Maurice B. Guidelines for national planning for the availability of publications. Wetherby IFLA International Office for UAP. 1983. p.2.

4. Line, M.B. Universal Availability of Publications and Developing Countries. In Vervliet, HDL, ed. Resource sharing of libraries in developing countries. Proceedings of the 1977 IFLA/Unesco Pre-session seminar for librarians from Developing Countries. Antwerp University, August 30 - September 4, 1977. München, Saur. 1978 (IFLA Publications 14) p166.

5. Arms, W.Y. Duplication in union catalogues. Journal of Documentation, 1973, 29 (4) p373-379.

6. Ibid. p378.

7. Aschenborn, Hans J. The SA UNICAT: South Africa's union catalogue of monographs on microfiche. ISBN Review, 1977, (1), 40-42.

8. Russon, D. Union catalogues at the British Library Lending Division. Interlending Review, 1980, 8 (1) p5.

IFLA 1984

IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE, NAIROBI 1984

Division: Collections and Services

Section: Interlending

---

# Supply of Literature from and about Africa in Europe with Special Regard to Interlibrary Loan in the Federal Republic of Germany

by

Dr. Irmstraud - D. Wolcke-Renk
Head of the Africa Dept.
University Library
Frankfurt/M., Fed. Rep. of Germany

## Introduction

The ever increasing book and pamphlet production on the African continent over the past ten years has led to a growing interest of European states in seeking relations with the now independent African states. Forced to fill a rather huge information gap, scientific libraries needed to acquire and make accessible the new literature complex.

Most European countries with a large number of scientific libraries organized accessibility to African literature by establishing joint national acquisition programmes.

This paper is concerned with the supply of literature from and about Africa in Europe, with special regard to interlibrary lending in the Federal Republic of Germany. The following will compare the acquisition programmes of several European countries with those in the Federal Republic of Germany and view the frequency of demand for African literature in the Federal Republic. A general view on Africana available in German Scientific libraries is given in the last chapter.

## Acquisition programme

### a) GREAT BRITAIN

In 1962, the effects of several librarians and institutions interested in Africa brought forth the 'Standing Conference on Library Materials on Africa' (SCOLMA)[1] in Great Britain. 125 scientists then founded the 'African Studies Association of the United Kingdom' (ASAUK) on behalf of scientific research in July of 1963.

SCOLMA developed a specialisation project which became effective in 1966. Based on the geographical and political regions in Africa the plan distributes the collection areas. 16 libraries are 'responsible for the acquisition of African publications and have pledged to acquire any and all publications published in the area assigned to them. Depending on the individual budges and the number of books published in the region a library is responsible for, individual libraries have to take care of 1 to 8 states. 3 of the 16 libraries specialise in collecting previously ascertained disciplines within the South African book production.

6 libraries with special collections complement their collections according to subject areas. Libraries participating on a voluntary basis were asked to finance Africanist acquisitions out of their own funds.
In the beginning periodicals were therefore omitted from the collection programmes, so that the libraries participating would be financially able to acquire anything published in Europe and the USA which concerned their special collection area.
The acquisition of contemporary autographs and posthumous works completes the SCOLMA project. The Oxford Colonial Record Project (OCRP) was created solely for this purpose. Systematically recording all former British colonial officials and settlers who have lived in Africa, the OCRP also inquires whether they or their heirs own any diaries or other records they might want to leave to the OCRP Incoming posthumous works are duly recorded, handed over to the Rhodes House Library in Oxford[3] and made available to research by publication of the library's acquisition lists. The OCRP also has persons who have worked or lived in Africa interviewed by historians.

b) FRANCE

France is currently developing a general special collection programme. The 'Direction des Bibliotheques, des Musees et de l'Information Scientifique et Technique' (DBMIST) has caused libraries to divide responsibilities. A group of "centres d'Acquisition de l'Information Scientifique et Technique' (CADIST) has been trying for a coordinated acquisition policy since 1980. Of the 20 centres planned 15 exist already. They are responsible for collecting scientific national and international literature published in the subject areas assigned to them. The centres for research and documentation on Africa are currently to be found in Paris,[4] Bordeaux (tropical geography) and Strasbourg (literature concerning Togo and Cameroun).

c) SCANDINAVIA

The Scandinavian Institute of African Studies in Uppsala is the Scandinavian centre for research in Africa. Operating under the auspices of the

Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs the institute is chaired by a committee of representatives from the 4 Scandinavian countries. Sweden finances 70% of the budget, with Denmark, Finland and Norway contributing 10% each. The research institute is the only Scandinavian library specialising in collecting material on modern Africa (26,000 monographs, 600 periodical). The library publishes a Scandinavian joint catalogue of African titles, listing its own as well as Africana of the Scandinavian scientific libraries.

d) SWITZERLAND

Although Switzerland does not have a general collection plan the individual libraries call significant collections[7] their own. Besides numerous university libraries and research institutes with reference libraries attached, two libraries are worth mentioning. The municipal library of Winterthur, with its collection of 30,000 monographs and 3,000 periodicals specialising in language and literature, and the Museum of Ethnology in Zurich, with an ethno-historical collection of 5,000 monographs and 50 periodicals.

e) ITALY, SPAIN, PORTUGAL

There exists virtually no information on these countries. The same holds true for the European socialist countries, though here the cause is the language problem. An up-date on this matter might be welcome by all at one of the next IFLA conferences.

f) FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

German libraries finance a large part of their acquisitions with the help of the German Research Society. In order to distribute the monies granted evenly, a 'Special Collection Plan'[8] was developed and put into effect in 1949. With this plan, in which the subject 'Africa' was only one among many, the German scientific libraries had acquired a joint acquisition programme.
The assignment of subject areas was guided by pragmatic reasons. Libraries

already owning a large share of literature on certain subjects were financed to specifically complete these subjects and keep the literature available for interlending within Germany. Therefore institutes doing research on certain topics and the libraries collecting literature on that topic are not always in the same location.

The programme as it stands today consists of 4 central subject libraries and 17 special collection libraries. The 4 subject libraries are

the Technische Informationsbibliothek, Hannover
the Library for Agriculture, Bonn
the Central Library for Medicine, Cologne, and
the Library of the Institute for World Economy, Kiel.

All other scientific subjects are distributed among the 17 special collection libraries. In 1983 all libraries combined received approx. 8 mill. Deutsche Mark from the German Research Society.

The 'Special Collection Guidelines' must be looked at from a practical point of view only. They as well as the project itself do not claim to be unchangeable. By constantly reviewing the guidelines as well as the structure and financial side of the project the Research Society has succeeded in clearly defining the individual collection areas so overlapping is mostly avoided.

What had actually been achieved, then, was a literature acquisition scheme by subjects - with a few exceptions. In areas geographically or culturally far removed from Europe regional literature selection was preferred over subject selection, the result being regional subject collections, e.g., 'Pacific,' 'Eastern Asia,' 'Africa.' Justifying regional selection were not only the various language difficulties but also the fact that the special collections available were already so large that it seemed more sensible to complete them rather than have another library start a new collection. Also, with increasing book production in removed cultural spheres a new problem surfaced, that of acquisition. It seemed reasonable to put only a few libraries rather than every library in Germany in charge of special collection acquisitions. (Note the parallels to SCOLMA.) Hence the libraries in charge of regional special collections acquire literature on all scientific subjects, excluding only current Economics, Law, Medicine and Natural History. Current literature on these four subjects is acquired by the previously mentioned 4 special libraries,

which are incorporated into the interlending system.
After this basic account of Germany's Special Collection Programme let us now take a closer look at the Africa collections.

If one were to consult two reference books published as part of the 'Dokumentationsdienst Afrika'[9] in 1971/72 one would discover that more than 142 libraries claim to own Africana collections. This includes branch libraries with a small but very specialised stock of Africana as well as university libraries with large collections. When taking a closer look at the lists one finds that the subject variety claimed is virtually non-existent in reality. Most libraries concentrate on collecting literature relating to Northern and/or Southern Africa or African Economics and Social Sciences. Also, most collections are kept at branch libraries and therefore not freely accessible to the general public.
Of the 142 libraries mentioned only 8 have been selected for the 'Special Collection Programme.' These were given the financial means to systematically complete their subject area. The special collection libraries are the only libraries receiving financial aid for their subject collections from the German Research Society. In return the libraries agree to provide full access to their collections, i.e., participate in interlending.
Africa as on of the subject fields named in the 'Special Collection Programme' is divided into three regions.
a) North Africa, i.e., 'Arabian Africa,' including the Sudan, Somalia and Ethiopia. Literature on this region is collected by the university library of Tubingen.
b) South Africa and Namibia
Since the university library of Gottingen had already been assigned the subject area 'Anglistics - Great Britain - Commonwealth,' literature on these subjects was collected in Gottingen until 1983. Since, however, any homeland achieving independence would have had to become part of the subject area 'Africa South of the Sahara' by subject definition, it was decided to make South Africa part of 'Africa South of the Sahara!' This subject field is collected by the university library of Frankfurt so literature on South Africa published after 1983 has to be requested in Frankfurt.
Afrikaans, though a language spoken in South Africa is collected not in

Gottingen but in Munster since the library there had been assigned the subject field 'Netherlands.'

c) Africa South of the Sahara

As already mentioned, this area is covered by the university library of Frankfurt mainly because the library managed to acquire the 'Library of the German Colonial Society' after WW II and therefore already owned a lot of literature on the subject. The 'Colonial Library,' consisting of 15,000 monographs and numerous journals, is still completed continuously by acquiring second hand books.

Until WW II the library purchased literature on Africa as a whole, since then the emphasis has shifted to 'Africa South of the Sahara.' The library purchases all the scientific literature available on this topic in Europe and Overseas including books obtained directly from African booksellers. Just like any other special collection library the Frankfurt library collects literature covering every subject field, e.g.,
Ethnology, Language & Literature, the Arts, History, Economic and Social History, Politics, Traditional Law, Geography, Religion and Philosophy. There are five subject areas which are not covered. They will be mentioned later. The volume number of the Africana collection in the Frankfurt library has long since exceeded the 100.000 mark. The time span covered ranges from the beginning of the 19th century to present times. The older publications are available partly on microfiche or as reprint.

d) Five exceptions concerning subject coverage should be mentioned. Some subject fields are collected by special libraries, such as
current Law at the legal branches of the Max-Planck-Institute,
current Economics in Kiel (World-Economy-Inst.),
contemporary Medicine in Cologne (Central Library f. Medicine),
Natural History in Gottingen and the Senckenberg Library, Frankfurt.
The fifth, so-called 'Gray Literature' (i.e., non-conventionally publ. lit.) is taken care of by the Africa Institute in Hamburg.

Compared with the 8 libraries sponsored (v. pg. 4) all other libraries follow an acquisition policy based mainly on actual need. However, the years have shown that often this need cannot be satisfied with the means available. This is made clearer by the fact that out of the 142 libraries mentioned on page 4 a total of 120 claim that regardless of emphasizing

certain subjects they collect literature pertaining to Africa as a whole. This of course results in the overlapping of some subjects while literature on more important issues can often not be obtained because of the limited budget. Also, access to these collections is mostly restricted to the branch libraries themselves since all of them are reference libraries. It boggles one's mind to think of the capacities freed if both the personnel and financial means of these libraries were to be combined and acquisitions managed centrally.

2) Utilization of Africana collections: the Federal Republic of Germany

As already stated, the German libraries mentioned are bound by law to participate in national as well as international interlending. Since interlending statistics normally only show a library's total turnover, spot checks on Africana collections were conducted to get an idea of the literature turnover in that field. The figures determined for 1983 are as follows.

| Subject area | collecting library | no of requests |
|---|---|---|
| Northern Africa | Tubingen | 670, approx. 20% not satisfied |
| South Africa | Gottingen | 120, approx. 10% not satisfied |
| Africa South of the Sahara | Frankfurt | 5.7000, approx. 20% not satisfied |
| non-conventionally publ. literature | Hamburg | 210, approx. 3% not satisfied |

The Hamburg Africa Institute library receives mainly requests based on the titles recorded in its catalogue[10] while the university libraries receive requests covering all subject areas. This explains the difference in the percentage of request not satisfied.

At the Frankfurt university library the request not satisfied consisted of the following types of literature:

35% older, non-conventionally publ. lit. (up to 1979). 1/3 of that was publ. in Africa, 2/3 outside of Africa.

30% literature of African origin (publ. 1980 - 1982).

20% non-conventionally publ. lit. (1980 cont.) and dissertations from France and Canada.

15% literature publ. in 1983.

The requests not satisfied were mostly for literature difficult to obtain. Details on that can be found in my paper on acquisition.
Nevertheless, the Special Collection Libraries are constantly trying to close the gaps. Requests not satisfied are checked all the time and - if at all possible - the literature requested is acquired. The libraries collecting the subject fields Humanities and Science received additional financial aid from the German Research Society.
The interests of the individual reader can only be determined by sorting the incoming requests according to subjects. During the test period in 1983 requests for the subject Politics were in the lead with 28%, followed by History and Social Sciences (14% ea.), the arts (12%) and Languages and Literature with 8% each. Ethnology was presented with only 4%.
The above figures vary a bit where the users of our Africa reading room are concerned. Quite naturally they tend to use the Colonial Library more often than others. Many students travel to Frankfurt for just this reason. Visitors from Africa are interested mainly in the German language literature of this special collection. The Frankfurt library also receives several hundred special requests a year from the German Research Society who then has the titles put on film.
Many African professors come here to work with our stock of literature in and on African languages. They claim we have by far the best and most extensive collection. African students studying at Saarbrucken University use the Frankfurt library as well. Saarbrucken is the only German university where - for historical reasons - the French doctoral degree can be obtained. This degree is valid in the individual's home country only.

3) How to gain access to the collections: The Federal Republic of Germany

After having shown who is responsible for collecting Africana in the individual European countries let us now take a look at how the reader gains access to this literature. At the end of this paper you will find a reference list[11] with the names of the libraries and catalogues of the various countries. The following will take a look at the situation in Germany.

As already mentioned, the special collection libraries are held to keep their stock available for interlending within Germany. If a reader finds his/her way to a library, then he/she will automatically receive literature out of the special subject collection. Availability and actual usage are, however, two different things. Many readers, students as well as professors, do not look byond their faculty libraries. So in order to make known what is available where the special collection libraries have started to publish as much information as possible on their collections. Most widely used are the accession lists[12] which are published regularly and show the lastest acquisitions in the various subject fields. These lists together with an African Journal List[13] are published by almost every European library with a large collection of Africana. They are distributed free of charge to libraries, faculties and private citizens alike. The subject catalogue is a must for every library but is naturally used mostly by those readers actually present in the library. Since the university library of Frankfurt has to supply all of Germany with literature on Africa it was decided to publish the subject catalogue 'Africa' in bookform. The first volume 'History I' was published in 1976 (300 ed., self publ.), vol. II cont. has been published by K.G. Saur, Munchen. Of the 20 volumes planned 7 have been puolished so far, vol. 10 (East Africa/ Kenya) will be published on occasion of this conference.

However, printing catalogues to make known what is in stock is still not very common. Only a few libraries publish their special collection catalogues[14] in bookform. With the limited capacities most libraries have it is virtually impossible to document and evaluate essays relating to a special collection field. But with the demand on essays growing all the time some libraries have started to publish an essay catalogue as well. Especially the libraries collecting the subject Economy and Social Sciences were

well fit person elwise to do so. Among others, the 'Dokumentationsleitstelle Afrika,' Hamburg, the 'Institut fur Entwicklungsforschung,' Bonn and, in Belguim and France, the Cedaf, Brussels and the CEGET, Bordeaux, should be mentioned here. Both Bordeaux and Bonn employ electronic data processing, the others conventional methods for printing catalogues.
The Frankfurt university library started to publish 'Current Contents Africa'[15] (CCA) in 1976. CCA is published quarterly and as the name implies, gives facsimile reproductions of the contents pages of Africanist serials. We try to include a number of important African serials though they appear rather irregularly. But it is this very fact which makes the information given all the more valuable to the user. The list of evaluated serials is growing all the time and every effort is made to ensure speedy appearance and up-to-dateness. In this, however, we are dependent on the regularity of each serial and how promptly it is received by us. The essays listed can be requested like any other monography in interlending.
Experience has shown that an inforamtion source such as CCA is useless without an index. The Frankfurt library therefore sees itself put before the task to produce an index as well, a feat not easy to accomplish. It can only be achieved by employing data processing and though the groundwork for a computerized index is already laid (two computer aided projects the 'Bibliography of Lingiustic Literature' and the 'Hessian Bibliography' exist already), many problems will have to be overcome still.

## Conclusion

The Special Collection Libraries must in the future not only spend large sums on books but also see to it that their stock is made known and more easily accessible. We are drowning in a flood of information, the flood being kept at bay only with the currently available catalogues. The only sensible way to properly utilize the stock of the larger Special Collection Libraries would be a subject information system provided by these libraries. The system should be able to produce comprehensive literature lists without needing too many search keys.

In Germany the only publicly accessible data bank storing material on Africa is 'Bibliodata,' produced by the German National Library in Frankfurt. Only German language monographs are represented though. There are, of course, the BNB magnetic tapes listing English monographs and various internal data banks mostly on the subjects 'Third World,' 'Developmental Aid' or 'Economics' and the one on 'Tropical Geography' in Bordeaux. To my knowledge no data bank exists for the Humanities, at least not in Europe.

The Frankfurt university library, in co-operation with the faculties, intends to evaluate its Africa serials relating to the Humanities and start a data bank. We would welcome offers of co-operation and participation from other institutions.

References


1. COLLISON, R.L.: The SCOLMA directory of libraries and special collections on Africa. London 1973.

2. KOHL, E.: Zur Frage des Literaturerwerbs in Afrika: Gegenwärtiger Stand und Möglichkeiten der Verhesserung. Sonderteil von 'Afrika heute' Bd 5, 1969.

3. FREWER, L.B.: Manuscript collection of Africana in Rhodes House Library, Oxford. Oxford 1971.

4. Bibliothèques spécialisées de Paris et de la région Parisienne. Sélection par mots matière. Bibliothèque Nationale. Paris 1978.

5. CEGET/Centre d'Etudes de geographie tropicale. Bordeaux 1979.

6. Newsletter from the Scandinavian Institute of African Studies. Vol. 22. (Nordiska Afrikainstitutet) Uppsala 1982.

7. HUBER, H.: Die Afrikaforschung in der Schweiz. In: Veröffentlichungen der Schweizerischen Afrika-Gesellschaft. Vol. 2, 1976. Bern.

   SULZER, O.: Die Africana-Sammlung der Stadtbibliothek Winterthur. Afrikanische Literaturen und Sprachen, Basel 1977.

8. Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft: Aufbau und Aufgaben. 7.Aufl. 1966. Wiesbaden.

9. Institutionen der Afrika-Arbeit in d. Bundesrepublik und in Berlin (West). (Dokumentationsdienst Afrika.1.) Hamburg 1971.

10. Dokumentationsdienst Afrika. Dokumentationsleitstelle Afrika, Hamburg. Hamburg 1971 ff.

11. v. 1,4,7,9 and

    Inventaire des ressources documentaires africanistes à Paris. Paris; Centre d'analyse et de recherche documentaires pour l'Afrique Noire. 1969.

    BENEWICK, A.J.: Asian and African collections in British libraries. Problems and prospects. (Librarianship and information studies.2.)

12. Neuerwerbungen Africka. Stadt- u. Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt/M. Abt. Afrika, Sommersammelgebiet AFrika südlich d. Sahara (6,31). Frankfurt/M. 1972 ff.

    Neuerwerbungen d. Orientalischen Abteilung. Universitätsbibliothek Tübingen.

    Neuer[illegible]bungen d. Bibliothek d. Institutes für Afrikakunde. Hamburg. Hamburg 1970 ff.

13. Periodika-Verzeichnis, Deutsches Institut f. Afrikaforschung. Hamburg 1970.

Afrika-Zeitschriften in der Stadt-u. Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt/M. Nebst Suppl. Frankfurt/M. 1973 ff.

Verzeichnis afrikabezogener Zeitschriftenbestände. Erstellt im Auftrag d. Arbeitskreises d. deutschen Afrika-Forschungs-und Dokumentationsstellen. (Dokumentationsdienst Afrika. Reihe B,4.) Hamburg 1976.

Zeitschriftenverzeichnis Orient (ZVOr). Tübingen 1983.

14. Fachkatalog Afrika. Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt/M. Bearb.: I.D. Wolcke-Renk. Frankfurt/M., München:Bd 1.1976 ff.

Bibliothek d. Institutes f. Weltwirtschaft Kiel. Sachkatalog. Boston 1968 ff.

15. Fiches d'ouvrages. Centre d'analyse et de recherche documentaires pour l'Afrique Noire. Paris 1966 ff.

Jahresbericht. Deutsches Institut f. Afrika-Forschung. Dokumentationsleitstelle Afrika. Hamburg 1972 ff.

Afrika-Dokumentation und -Forschung in Hamburg. Deutsches Institut f. Afrika-Forschung. Hamburg 1969.

Kurzdarstellung der Dokumentations-Leitstelle Afrika. Deutsches Institut für Afrika-Forschung. Hamburg 1972.

CEDAF, Centre d'étude et de documentation africaines. Réalisations et perspectives. 1971-1978. Bruxelles 1976.

WALRAET, M.: Le centre de documentation africaine de la Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique. (In: Bulletin des Séances. 1968,2.)

v.also ref.no. 5

16. Current Contents Africa. CCA. Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt/M.

Solma

---

Area Specialisation Project (June 1966)

Aberdeen University: Central African Republic, ad, Cameroun, Gabon, Congo (Brazzaville)
Birmingham University: former French West Africa (Dahomey, Togo, Upper Volta, Senegal, Mali, Guinea, Niger, Ivory Coast)
British Library of Political and Economic Science: South Africa (politics and economics)
Durham University: Sudan, Libya
Edinburgh University: Malawi, Zambia
Exeter University: Ghana
Foreign and Commonwealth Office: Mauritius Feychelles
Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London: South Africa (law)
Institute of Commonwealth Studies, London: Sierra Leone and Gambia
Institute of Education, London: South Africa (education)
King's College, London: Angola, Mozambique, Portuguese Guinea, Sao Tome
Leeds University: Zaire, Rwanda, Barundi
Liverpool University: Spanish Sahara, Ferna do Po, Rio Muni, Canary Islands
London School of Economics: see British Library of Political and Economic Science
National Central Library: South Africa (excluding politics and economics, law, education)

Royal Commonwealth Society: Nigeria, Ascension Islands, St Helena, Tristan
School of Oriental and African Studies: Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Somalia and French Somaliland
Southampton University: Rhodesia
Sussex University: Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda
University of London Library: Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland, Liberia

Specialisation by Disciplines

Commonwealth Forestry Institute, Oxford: Forestry and allied subjects
Department of Earth Sciences, Leeds: Geology
London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine: Preventative and tropical medicine
Nuffield College, Oxford: Trade unions
Royal Institute of international Affairs (Chatham House): African international organisations
Tropical Products Institute: Tropical agriculture

IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE, MAINZ 1984
Division: Collections & Services
Section: Serial Publications
120

33-SER-1-E

# EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR WORK WITH SERIALS

by

DAVID P WOODWORTH
SENIOR LECTURER, SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE,
TECHNICAL COLLEGE, LOUGHBOROUGH, UK
ASSOCIATE LECTURER, UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, LOUGHBOROUGH.

For internal use only:
To be brought to meeting as:
.....114.....
Remarks:
to be presented orally ☒
for distribution only ☐

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR WORK WITH SERIALS

From the inception of our educational syllabus, first introduced in the early 1900's, until the introduction of full time education in 1964 developments were mainly in piecemeal and traditional form. However from the introduction of full time education the complexion of our educational programmes has changed radically from overall and complete control by the Library Association to, what it is now, that body merely exercising validating rights over institutions laying down their own internal programmes.

Even in my 18 years in library education I have seen many changes:- the demise of part-time correspondence courses, the near demise of the two year non-degree course, the introduction and now near domination of degree courses and the growth in their length to three or four years in the undergraduate sector.

It used to be that some form of pre-library school experience was deemed to be desirable but now I am not so sure that this <u>is</u> really necessary. What I am convinced of is:-

a) that the academic content of courses can be completed in a maximum of two years

b) that in between years one and two should be a full year in practice consisting of four months each in a Corporate, Public and Academic library. You will notice that I say <u>AND</u> not <u>OR</u>.

This is deliberate for in this way the student will be able to relate early (first year) academic work to practice and would obtain a grounding which would prepare the student for a more mature participation in final year studies. Additionally I believe that he would possibly be better equipped to make a considered decision upon which type of library his future career

would be based.

Over the years there have been a variety of papers and working parties giving consideration to the future of our educational programmes all basically agreeing with McGarry's assertion that a syllabus should reflect the practical requirements of librarians in post. But unfortunately changes take so long to take effect that by the time they do come about the practical requirements too have tended to change. Witness only the rapid developments of IT during the last ten years or so.

Having recognised the almost impossible task of trying to keep abreast of current requirements, whether due to time taken for change to take effect or due to outdated advice by 'advisers', it must be said that at least part of the development policy of a library and information service must be embedded in some form of educational programme. Schools should aim to train future staffs for librarianship rather than simply in it - a subtle difference. It is time that a realistic look is taken at our syllabuses and that time on courses should not be extended purely for academic respectability.

During the three year period I have suggested a greater appreciation of the importance of varying forms of material, in theory and practice in varying environments, would be gained and this too would be a useful addition to the educative process.

Currently not many schools afford any concentration on examples of form but through the system of options at some schools concentration on a limited number of special types has been possible. It is in this context that serials appear, albeit belatedly. It mystifies me as to why, until comparatively recently, serials specifically have been so neglected because their importance as an information purveying tool has long been recognised

together with their attendant organisational and bibliographical problems. After all education is one way of effectively and efficiently servicing what is perhaps the most costly element in a library's stock. Serials are not alone in this situation but perhaps they are the largest and most all pervading example.

Basically educational provision can be conducted at 4 levels:-

a) Professional, full or part time

b) Para professional, full or part time for technician level staff

c) Refresher courses

d) In service training.

Within library schools serials still do not figure highly, except in one or two cases like Loughborough and Manchester in the UK and Drexel in the USA. Yes, aspects bibliographical <u>are</u> included at most schools but at the expense of aspects organisational. Probably this is because so many students go into public libraries rather than academic or corporate after graduation and also due to the luddite - like resistance to change in some schools and other authorities.

I have recently completed a short study sponsored by the British Library into Serials Education in the UK and it is very clear that practitioners are not getting the type of trained students they require in this area. For the purposes of further thought and discussion either here or in the future the <u>broad</u> outlines of our syllabus can be outlined as follows:-

INTRODUCTION - definition and introduction of basic terms, primary/secondary/tertiary.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

PUBLISHING - copy preparation, refereeing, printing, binding, copyright.

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT - core journal development, selection tools and aids, acquisition methods, pricing/budgetting.

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT - receipt procedures, display, cataloguing, indexing and abstracting, current awareness, back issues, retention/disposal.

SECONDARY - History, production, citation indexing, selection criteria, selection aids, bibliographical control, use (manual/machine).

TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT - alternatives, batch/on line, new formats, service philosophy, future.

SPECIAL TYPES OF SERIAL - Newspapers, technical reports, conference proceedings, 'grey' literature.

OTHER TOPICS - standardisation, bibliometrics.

A limited number of guest speakers may also be invited and full day visits to a bindery, printing firm, and subscription agents.

The survey referred to also revealed a widespread and continuing need for short and refresher course education both at professional and non-professional level.

The established professional associations have shown scant interest in serials and it has been left to the recently formed UK Serials Group to show the way both in this and other respects, and believing that there was a need for such courses a programme was devised and courses mounted. During the coming year the following are planned:-

a) Serials and automation

b) Finance and Serials

c) Periodicals administration

d) Learning about serials automation

e) Introduction to serials bibliography

f) Newspaper workshop.

a, b and f are for middle and senior staff and c, d and e for junior and clerical staffs.

Education need not only be through formally arranged courses. Recognising this the UK Serials Group deliberately set out from its inauguration to attract a membership representing all interested parties - printers, publishers, binders, agents, librarians, information workers - for in this way a forum is fostered and at meetings a great deal of self education is practised.

That serials has become the in word will be evident to many by the increase in courses now on offer from other organisations, by the number of conferences that feature serials, by the number of articles in the professional press, and by the increase in texts of late. BUT library schools still resist the provision of adequate treatment and the provision of short courses.

The standards of in-service training will naturally vary according to the ability of the staffs of libraries to undertake this task - in many cases unwelcome. In too many cases tutoring only covers an individual library's practice rather than attempting to convey a wider view of the world of serials.

So far I have referred to education in what is called the developed world.

Some two years ago I was privileged to be awarded a consultancy with the World Health Organisation, centred in Alexandria, Egypt, involving some 22 countries within their Eastern Mediterranean Region. It soon became abundantly clear to me how much we take for granted and how much education in general, not just at professional level, is lacking or non existent. More specifically it was clear that many libraries are, and will continue to be in the foreseeable future, under the direct control of staff having no, or minimal professional education, and at best having an occasional visit from someone more knowledgeable whose main base could be many miles distant.

Following my work on this project the WHO considered, and still have it in mind, to create some form of manual of procedure and practice which could be translated into various languages. To my knowledge this has not yet been developed to publication stage. Whilst this can be defined in some quarters as an exercise in standardisation, to such staffs as they were meant to assist it would, in fact, prove to be an exercise in learning through doing by laid down procedures.

It seems to me that where education is well nigh impossible, but where an element of literacy is present standardisation may be the first step towards education and a programme of this nature could well fall within the responsibility of this IFLA section to promote.

Following this, even though until recently it has been frowned upon as an educational exercise but is now gaining wide popularity under the auspices of the Open University in the UK, I would suggest that some consideration be given to distance learning as an educative exercise.

That this idea may well take many years to germinate I am under no doubt but a start has to be made somewhere, with due regard to distance problems, literacy, numeracy, transportation problems, moves, and politics, but where better for such a seed to be sown than at this conference in a country of the 3rd world.

This Conference theme is the Basis of library and information service for National development. We should never forget that in a very large part of the world whatever we may deem to be the ideal that may well be an impossible goal. The onus is surely on us to spread the gospel through Deeds NOT words.

IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE, NAIROBI 1984
Division: Collections & Services
Section: Serial Publications

34-SER-2-E

1984 120

# EDUCATION FOR SERIALS LIBRARIANSHIP: WHAT ARE THE BASIC COMPONENTS?

by

Michael E. D. Koenig

Professor of Information Science
School of Library Service,
Columbia University
New York, New York 10027

*For internal use only:*
To be brought to meeting no:
114
Remarks:
to be presented orally ☒
for distribution only ☐

## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to try to address the question of what should be the principle components of a course of study emphasizing serials librarianship in a library education program. This paper will not try to philosophise about the distinctions between and the appropriate emphasis upon training versus education. It will simply try to focus upon those knowledge areas which the author believes to be essential to a serials librarian functioning in an administrative capacity, that is a serials librarian functioning in a decision making rather than a clerical capacity. To enable the reader to assess potential bias, the author is presently a professor of information science in a library school, and in previous jobs he has had the responsibility for developing and managing serials systems in three different contexts - major scientific research library, abstracting and indexing organisation, and serials agent. This paper therefore, will attempt to look at serials librarianship broadly, not merely in the context of libraries per se.

A basic assumption of this paper is that education for serials librarianship will in most cases take place in a library school program, and that that program will have some sort of core curriculum that includes topics such as cataloging, information retrieval, data structures, reference skills, etc. - that is the components reflecting the basic essence of librarianship, putting information away and finding it again. These topics are indeed important for serials librarianship, but since we can assume that they are provided, we need not spend time restating the obvious.

Not quite so obvious are four additional components that should be part of a serials concentration in library education. Those four components are:

- Knowledge of the capabilities of computers and telecommunications systems, particularly the trends in technological capability;
- Knowledge of scholarly communications, the mechanisms and social dynamics of the creation and dissemination of information;
- Complementary quantitative skills for decision making; and
- Knowledge of basic economic principles.

## COMPUTER AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS CAPABILITIES

A principal requirement today in the education of serials librarians is a knowledge of the capabilities of computer and telecommunication systems, and a knowledge of the rapidly changing capabilities of the technologies upon which those systems are constructed.

The same point can of course be made about virtually any area of library operations, but it is particularly appropriate and timely in the area of serials librarianship. The reason is that the automation of serials activities, particularly in libraries themselves is a relatively recent phenomenon, at least in comparison with functions such as circulation and cataloging. One reason for this sequence of development is the inherent awkwardness and intractability of serials operations. Another reason lies in the relationship between the nature of serials operations and the sequence of development of computer and telecommunications capability.[1]

Serials operations do not lend themselves as readily to economies of scale as do, for example, monograph cataloging operations. The cataloging of one library may well serve many libraries, and for monograph processing, the cataloging operation is a major component of that processing. Since libraries can achieve economies of scale by centralizing cataloging data, there has been a strong economic incentive to do so, and centralized operations like OCLC were relatively compatible with and well supported by the computer and telecommunications technology of the 1970's.

In serials processing however, although cataloging is not unimportant, the major resource consuming activity is not cataloging; it is rather that of logging in and processing the never ending stream of arriving issues. Here there is relatively little opportunity for economies of scale. Libraries

cannot share data. Just because your library has received a particular issue of a periodical does not mean that my library has. The major resource consuming activity of serials handling, from the library point of view, must therefore take place locally.

It should be added parenthetically that there are some opportunities for economies of scale if the serials agent directly receives the issues, and then tranships them to the library.[1] This generally is applicable however, only when the agent is gathering publications for airfreight delivery to overseas customers. For domestic or geographically proximate publications, or for libraries that cannot afford airfreight delivery of overseas publications, the economies achieved are likely to be only marginal.[2]

The point is that it is only relatively recently that the cost of computation and storage has reached a level that makes serials automation at the local level cost effective for a large number of libraries. In other words, the microcomputer has arrived.

Another point inherent in the economics of serials handling is that the relative rate of change in the components of computer and telecommunications systems is a major determinant in the design of effective systems.[3] Serials processing is a mix of local holding data best handled locally, common bibliographic information that ideally should be broadly accessible, and publisher/agent library transactions that are increasingly more cost effectively done via telecommunications than via the mail. This is a more complex environment than that which was the case for the automation of monographic bibliographic automation where much more of the data could be stored and processed centrally. The result is that the design of serials systems is complex, balancing local and central data storage, and it is very sensitive to the comparative costs of processing data locally versus centrally.

To make appropriate decisions about serials automation therefore requires a knowledge of computer and telecommunications technology and the trends in that technology. That such decisions are not easy is revealed by an examination of the recent past in serials automation. The principal model for the systems being implemented and designed now is that of most activity being undertaken locally at the library, with some modest communication between the local sites and a central store of information, either a serials agent or a bibliographic utility, or access from the local site to several principal modes, both serials agents and utilities.

By contrast, the principal model used only a few years ago was that of almost all storage and processing accomplished at some central location, either serials agent or bibliographic utility, with extensive communication between the local site and the center, and with minimal storage or processing done locally. Presently, one can observe the haste with which organizations who designed centralized serials systems only a few years ago are scrambling to catch up with more recently designed systems.

If there is relatively little to be gained in the way of economies of scale for serials processing, why is it a candidate for automation? The principal reason for automation of serials processing is the claiming function. Claiming, the identification of issues that should have arrived, but have not, and the taking of steps to acquire those issues in a prompt and timely fashion, is one of the most basic functions of serials management, and unfortunately, a terribly easy function to slight. Nothing dramatic happens immediately if claiming is slighted, and there always seems to be some other more pressing problem, books to be put on reserve, etc. In the long run however, to slight claiming is to be penny wise and pound foolish. For example, material that could have been replaced easily if claimed promptly, frequently can only be replaced later at much greater expense.

It is in claiming that automation can make a major contribution to serials management. It is not that automation can do something that cannot be done manually, but that it can at trivial incremental effort do something that generally so often it is not done manually. An automated system can prepare candidate claims that can then be quickly scanned by a librarian. Those candidate claims that are either inappropriate or premature can be either cancelled or returned to the queue for future consideration, while the balance of the claims are automatically dispatched via word processed letters or electronically. This can be accomplished with a minimum of effort, and because it can be accomplished with so little effort in proportion to the obvious benefits, it is accomplished. The system in a sense demands attention to the candidate claims it has prepared. By contrast, in a manual system, even where human resources are comparatively inexpensive, claiming tends not to get done, there always seems to be something more compelling that needs doing today, and in the long run, the performance of the system suffers.

There are of course other benefits of automation, automatic compilation of routing lists, electronic ordering, etc., but it is in claiming that the principal advantage to automated serials management lies. It is also the principal reason, coupled with the rapidly falling price of microcomputers, why a familiarity with computer technology is not appropriate merely for serials librarians in developed countries, but for serials librarians in developing countries as well. Libraries seem to be an almost infinite sink of personnel resources, and claiming is almost always treated as a poor cousin. Simultaneously, microcomputers are becoming vastly more powerful and marked less expensive with remarkable speed. Furthermore, claiming, or more accurately, candidate claim identification is a function that can be accomplished easily on a microcomputer without the need for expensive communication links with external data centers.

A second area of concentration appropriate to the serials librarian is what might be called scholarly communication - that is the study of how the system of knowledge creation and dissemination works.

A very salutary introductory remark to library school students is that they all came to library school with a profound misunderstanding of what scholarly journals are all about. Library school students have been exposed primarily to popular and semi-scholarly journals, and the self selection process of admission to library school has emphasized service to users. But! Scholarly journals are not there to serve the readers, at least not primarily, they are there to serve the authors. Only very secondarily is the reader's interest important in fashioning scholarly journals.

The above introduction overstates the case of course, but it is a very salutary way to get student thinking about how the system of scholarly communication works. It is also an exceedingly useful construct from which to explain numerous features of the system, such as page charges for example, that are otherwise inexplicable.

This knowledge of scholarly communication is of more than just academic interest however. It is only from a thorough understanding of how the system operates that the quantifiable bibliometric phenomenon such as Bradford's law of concentration can be convincingly derived, and more importantly, employed appropriately and with confidence.

One of the points that will emerge from a study of scholarly communication is that we have, or we believe we have, a reasonably thorough understanding of the process of communication at the research front, but as we move further

from the research front and move into the transition from science to technology, our confidence that we understand the system becomes substantially less. The relationship between reserve and technology is complex and poorly understood. There is no simple continuum from science to technology as Derek Price has eloquently pointed out.[4]

The ramifications of the above are that the lessons learned and the procedures developed in the context of the research front must be applied very gingerly in the context of technology and of development. A further ramification is that a great deal of research needs to be done concerning the flow of information at the technological and developmental level. The serials librarian should have a sufficient grounding of scholarly communication to have both a good feel for what is known and for where it is applicable.

Related to scholarly communication is a knowledge of bibliometrics, the application of quantitative techniques to communications phenomenon, particularly serial literature and the citations therein. Bibliometrics is of course a very useful tool for collection management and serials acquisition and retentions decisions, but it must be tempered with a knowledge of the local context and of the limitations of bibliometrics that result primarily from the dynamics of the publication process. There is not space here, nor is it appropriate to discuss the limitations of bibliometrics, for example the author's penchant to cite not the source that alerted the author, New Scientist perhaps, but rather the source where the information originally appeared, perhaps Science, nor other biases in citation patterns, and biases in database coverage. What is the point, is that as we move further from the research front, as we move toward technology and development information, bibliometrics, exceedingly useful as it is, must be applied with great care, and that care in turn depends upon a broad knowledge of scholarly communications.

## NUMERACY

A third requirement for serials librarians is that they should be numerate, that is relatively sophisticated in quantitative and evaluative skills. Indeed, this need for numeracy has already unavoidably crept in above in discussing bibliometrics and scholarly communication.

The late Bob Haynes in his introduction to the Journal Citation Reports produced by the Institute for Scientific Information used the phrase "the ever changing river of journals" to describe the nature of serials and serials librarianship.[5] It is a potent phrase, suggesting as it does the unceasing inexorable production of serials and the necessity for constant vigilance lest we be drowned in a flood. The user is concerned with the information contained, but the librarian must control the river and must take soundings and readings and measure the rate of flow, and perhaps also the amount of sediment. The librarian, must in short, use quantitative techniques.

Librarians have often unfortunately been very much lacking in this quantitative sophistication. For example, it is almost an industry within serials librarianship to analyse the cost increases in serials year to year in different disciplines.[6] Yet, almost nowhere in the literature is it recognised that what is being measured is the size of the container, not the content. Journals are simply containers for the articles they contain. Journals themselves tend to increase in size over time, and there are substantial differences in the rate of such growth across different disciplines. The newer the disciplines, the more rapid the rate of within journal growth appears to be. The point is that journal cost growth figures by title may be useful in predicting one's budget next year for a collection of a given number of titles, but they say relatively little about content or information per

monetary unit. If milk that was delivered in one liter bottles is now delivered in two liter bottles, the price per bottle has probably increased, but we cannot necessarily conclude from that that the price of milk has risen. Yet, that is precisely what serials librarians have happily, or more accurately, woefully, been doing for years.

Again, if we are going to accurately measure what we are doing so that we can make appropriate decisions, we must be able to use quantitative techniques with skill and avoid such obvious errors as confusing the container with the content. Not only do we fool ourselves, but we lose credibility with those persons or institutions we would like to be able to influence.

## ECONOMICS OF INFORMATION

A fourth major area of concentration appropriate to serials librarianship is what might be termed the economics of information. Again, the subject of economics has been prefigured in discussing numeracy above. The proportion of a library's or information center's resources expended on serials is frequently very large. It is not unusual for a library to spend forty or more percent of its budget on acquisitions, and serials are a major portion of a library's acquisitions budget.[7] Indeed, for many libraries, particularly scientific and technical libraries, serials may account for more than ninety percent of the acquisitions budget.

Library education in general may be faulted for not placing enough emphasis upon basic managerial and economic concepts, but nowhere does this seem to be more apparent than in serials librarianship. Indeed, serials librarianship seems to be characterized by basic economic and quantitative misunderstandings.

For example, one such misunderstanding concerns the effect of having a dual or multi-tier pricing schedule for serials, one price - high - for libraries, and another price - low - for individuals. Librarians in many countries have been declaiming at the unfairness of the practice. The assumption that such librarians have made is that one standard price would be 'fairer' and would result in a lower price for libraries. Such an assumption is not necessarily true, and indeed is probably not true. For a product such as a serial which is characterised by high 'first copy' costs, that is high 'start up' or fixed costs, and comparatively modest additional copy or incremental costs, the establishment of a second and lower price to attract a market for whom the initial price is too expensive may in fact result in lower prices for both communities. Indeed, the classic example of such a phenomenon is that of the "service basis" method of charging for indexes. To illustrate the point, let us assume the following very simplified example:

> The cost of compiling, preparing, and producing the first copy of an index will cost 800,000 Monetary Units (MU). Each additional copy will cost 600 MU. There are approximately 1,000 large libraries that could afford and would be willing to pay 1,400 MU for the index. This would yield 1000 x 1,400 MU or 1,400,000 MU, sufficient to pay the start up costs of 800,000 MU plus the 600,000 additional copy costs (1000 x 600 MU). Costs would balance revenue. Now suppose there were an additional 2,000 other libraries (perhaps smaller libraries, or libraries in less affluent countries) that could not afford 1,400 MU but would be willing to pay 750 MU for the index. Total cost to produce 3000 copies would be 2,600,000 MU (800,000 MU + 3000 x 600 MU). The

revenue from the 2000 additional libraries would be 1,500,000 (2000 x 750 MU), and the original 1000 libraries would need to generate 1,100,000 MU (2,600,000 MU - 1,500,000 MU). This would result in a balance if the subscription price to the original 1000 libraries were 1,100 MU (1,100 MU x 1000 = 1,100,000 MU). The original libraries would be paying substantially more than the 750 MU paid by the second tier of libraries, but substantially less than the 1,400 MU they would have to pay if there were a single tier pricing system.

The irony is that librarians have traditionally been quite happy to regard the service basis of publications as a very clever and beneficial pricing mechanism when it was used for indexes and applied solely to libraries, with larger libraries paying more than smaller libraries. Indeed, Ms. Malclea referred to its introducer as an 'angel of bibliography',[8] but many of those same librarians have seen the same logic as evil when used for serials and libraries and individuals are defined as different tiers. The economic logic is equally persuasive in either case. The only change is the perception of self interest - who is us? and who is them?

Similarly, the observation that prices to libraries are increasing at a more rapid rate than are prices to individuals, does not necessarily imply that publishers are taking advantage of librarians. If publishers correctly assess the situation to be one in which the price elasticity of individuals is greater than the price elasticity of libraries (that is, for a given proportional price increase, individuals are more likely to cancel their subscriptions than are libraries), then it is indeed to the advantage not only to the publisher, but also to the libraries, to raise the price to libraries faster than the price to individuals is raised. A danger here, is that librarians,

by attacking a practice that may well be and probably is in their best interest, may push the publishing community toward practices that are less beneficial to libraries. These points are addressed in greater detail in an earlier paper by Koenig.[8]

The point here is not to argue in favor of any particular pricing scheme. but simply to make the point that an understanding of basic economics is vital if librarians are to intelligently influence the economic systems in which they operate.

## CONCLUSION

If one tries to put the components above into a more general framework, that framework would have three components and an underlying substrate. The first component is a knowledge of the techniques of librarianship and information science, Fairthorne's "marking and parking" or Fraser's "putting information away and finding it again."[9] This paper assumes that this component is adequately covered in a typical library/information curriculum.

The second component is knowledge of the user community and how their information systems, both formal and informal, operate. It is the author's contention that these aspects are not as well covered as they ought to be in most educational programs. Librarians are not as aware as they might be that libraries are not so much a system, as they are a component of a much larger system. That in turn is another way of saying that librarians need to look more at the system from the user's point of view rather than from the librarian's point of view. The above is not a noval observation, but after all great truths are frequently platitudinous. The author is perhaps more acutely aware than most librarians of the difference, if only because he has relatively recently made the shift from being the manager of library/information

operations to being a university professor entitled to routine and courteous service from a major university library. Despite the fact that the author has access to online databases, because he teaches their use, in a fashion that other professors typically do not have, the difference between being the librarian and being the user is enormous, and the change, in terms of being made aware of the user's frustrations, is thoroughly salutary. It is a change that perhaps every librarian should have to make at least once a decade. If that were the case, our services might be much more responsive than they are to what the user really needs.

The third component is that of basic managerial and decision making skill. This component is also one that the author contends is not adequately conveyed in a typical library/information education. It can be argued that such matters are properly the content of an educational program in business administration or public administration and not the subject of a library/information degree. That such matters are properly the content of an administration degree is of course correct, but I intensely dispute any implication that they are not the proper content of a library/information degree. Such skills are needed in library administration, particularly in "serials management". It is interesting, and perhaps revealing, that serials management is in fact a commonly used phrase while there are no similarly common terms such as monograph management or acquisitions management or circulation management. One can indeed acquire management skills by pursuing a degree in business administration or public administration, but because of policy constraints and financial constraints, including the relatively modest pay of librarians, it is only a rather small handful of librarians who are able to do so. The programmatic consequence is that managerial and decision making skills should be taught in library/information programs. Such skills may also be taught, or

more appropriately, improved and brought up to date, in continuing or post entry level education. But, the latter is a complement to, not a substitute for, such education in the basic professional degree. One important reason behind that distinction is that to a large extent it is the basic professional degree that defines the culture of the field. If basic managerial and decision making skills are not taught in the basic professional degree, then it becomes easy for practitioners not to define them as appropriate to the field. In short, one of the functions of the basic professional degree is to lay the groundwork for later continuing or post entry level education, and in the area of basic managerial and decision making skills, we have not done enough.

The underlying substrate is the computer and telecommunications technology upon which library and information systems are increasingly based. This is obviously basic to all of the points above. What is not so obvious is the importance of knowing not just what is technologically feasible now, but knowing as well the trends of technology, the trends which will define what will be feasible soon, and which will define how systems should be configured to avoid premature and costly obsolescence. What most saliently characterizes computer and telecommunications technology is the great speed with which that technology is changing and with which capabilities are increasing. This has to logical consequences. The first is the necessity to focus upon the change and what effects that change is likely to have, and not just upon the technology itself. The second consequence is that the rate of penetration of the technology will be very rapid, just as transitor radios penetrated far more rapidly than did steam engines.

The point has been made that the experimental growth of computer capability and storage capacity had been underway for some time before the

threshold was reached at which it affected and produced experimental change in the library world.[11] As a consequence of that threshold phenomenon and of premature attempts at automation, the library community tended to discount the impact of computers and telecommunications - "we have heard all the predictions and read about project Intrex's, but nothing has changed." The library community was therefore unprepared for the stunning speed with which the computer has changed our field.

The points above were made in the context of the "developed world." The point I wish to conclude with is that precisely the same phenomenon is likely to happen everywhere. The only difference is the height of the threshold. And, in a Moore's law environment, where capability doubles every two years (that is, a millionfold increase over the span of a forty year professional career), the height of the threshold is relatively unimportant. No matter how high, it will be reached rather soon in most of the world. Computerization may seem just a developed world indulgence; it is not. All library education must emphasize computer and telecommunications technology if we are to make the best use of it. There is probably no librarian being educated anywhere today from whom computers and telecommunications will not be a very important part of their career.

Reference:


1). Koenig, Michael E.D. & Safford, Herbert D. "Professional Stratification and the Management of Research Libraries" to appear in Library Journal.

2). Koenig, Michael E.D. "Serials Processing and Scale Economies", Journal of Library Administration 3(1): 59-66, Spring 1982.

3). Koenig, Michael E.D. "Fiber Optics and Library Technology" to appear in Library Hi-Tech.

4). Price, Derek J. de S. "The Relationship between Science & Technology and their Implications for Policy Formation" in Science & Technology Policies, (Strasser, G. & Simons, E.M. eds.), Cambridge, Mass., Ballinger, 1973.

5). Haynes, Robert. "Introduction" in Garfield, E. Journal Citation Reports, Science Citation Index 1977, Volume 9, Philadelphia, Institute for Scientific Information, 1978.

6). Brown, Norman B. & Phillipe, Jane. "Price Indexes for 1983: U.S. Periodicals & Serial Services", Library Journal 108(15): 1659-62, 1 Sept. 1983.

7). Jackson, E.B. & Jackson, R.L. "The Industrial Special Library Universe - A 'Base Line' Study of Its Extent & Characteristics", Journal of the American Society for Information Science 28(3): 135-152, May 1977.

8). Koenig, Michael E.D. "Serials Dual Pricing: The Librarians' Hobgoblin", The Serials Librarian 8(3): 25-28, Spring 1984.

9). Fraser, Walter, quoted in "The Education of Librarians for Data Administration" by Koenig, Michael E.D. & Kochoff, Stephen T., Education for Information 1(3): 217-228, Sept. 1983.

10). DeGennaro, Richard. "Theory versus Practice in Library Management", Library Journal 108(13): 1318-1321, July 1983.

11). Koenig, Michael E.D. "The Information Controllability Explosion", Library Journal 107(19): 2052-2054, 1 November 1982.

IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE, NAIROBI 1984
Division: Collections & Services
Section: Serial Publications

35-SER-3-E

84 120

# SERIALS OF THE POOR: THEIR NATURE, IMPORTANCE, PROBLEMS AND SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

By

THEOPHILUS E. MLAKI

Principal Librarian and Head,
National Bibliographic Agency
Tanzania Library Services Board

Chairman,
Tanzania Library Association

*internal use only:*
be brought to meeting no:
. . 152 . . . . . .
arks:
be presented orally ☒
distribution only ☐

Mr. Chairman, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen. When the Secretary of the IFLA Section of Serial Publications, Mme C. Girard, approached me last year during the ISD Directors meeting in Washington, and suggested that I prepare a paper for this conference I accepted without hesitation. I soon realized that what I had agreed to do was a difficult task. First, difficult in the sense that the study, processing, control and management of serial publications baffles not only librarians but also publishers, subscription agents and users of these resources. Second, studying anything in relation to a developing or poor country is even more difficult as necessary data and information is practically not available and almost non-existent.

However, Mr. Chairman, serials of the poor need to be studied and their problems identified. I wish, therefore, to thank you Mr. Chairman and members of your section for allowing me time to present my observations on what would at first sight seem to be an unimportant topic, but one which will need solutions if we are to have a fair, equal and happy world.

THE POOR

So many terms and phrases have been introduced to describe poor countries of the world. We call them developing countries, less developed countries, emerging nations, Third World, countries of the South, non-industrialized countries, underdeveloped countries, and sometimes they are called primitive nations. I prefer calling them poor nations - poor not only in terms of absolute poverty but also because they are information poor. They lack what is now considered a powerful tool of development - information and all that goes with it.

Our country Tanzania, has the doubtful distinction of being included among the United Nations list of the 25 poorest

countries of the world. Although none of us here suffers personally from absolute poverty, Nyerere[1], President of the United Republic of Tanzania, reminds us that, poverty, to those of us whom history has condemned to manage, is an agony all the same. We therefore have to know and understand what it means to be poor.

In a poor country, poverty means babies dying of malaria because the dispensary has no drugs and the state has no money to provide these drugs; it means peasants and workers weakened by hunger and disease and failing to produce, with primitive tools, enough for their children in the coming year; it means an export crop failing to get to the port where it can be sold because there is no foreign exchange to buy the spare part for the wagon which should carry it; it means millions of unemployed or underemployed men and women without unemployment benefits; it means primary schools, and even universities, lacking basic serials and text-books, and quite often it means millions of people dying every year because they have nothing to eat, and worse still have no access to scientific and technological information which could be used appropriately in development to reduce their hunger and poverty.

Various reasons have been advanced as to why poor nations remain poor. Some say that the people of these countries do not work hard enough. Others attribute all the poverty to colonialism. Progressive politicians and economists point out that the present international economic structure is unfair to poor countries because it is dominated by the rich and through it the poor will remain poor and get even relatively poorer[2]. These politicians and economists are demanding a New International Economic Order which will enable poor nations to develop themselves according to their own interests and efforts.

Librarians and information specialists seem to advance the argument that poor countries are poor because they lack adequate information relevant to national needs and objectives. Countries cannot choose the best course of action in terms of their own national interests if they have no relevant information[3]. In his study carried out in Tanzania in 1978, Samaha[4] points out that there is an inadequate supply of scientific and technological information to various production sectors. For example, in agriculture, very few booklets are produced, because of shortage of paper, and there are production rules or guidelines to be followed so that the few publications produced are of poor quality and often not suitable for the intended audience. Those suitable for a particular audience are normally in low circulation and therefore never reach the intended audience. Ukulima wa Kisasa, a magazine aimed at more than 5 million farmers, has a total circulation of only 27,000. As a tool for disseminating technical information to farmers its coverage is, therefore, still very limited. Also, as an inforamtion transfer tool among farmers and between farmers and research workers, it is totally inadequate. No wonder the country cannot feed itself.

## THE POOR NEED THEIR OWN SERIALS

The availability of serials and other information sources to the people of the poor countries is fundamental to their development process. Access to information and ideas is indispensable to the development of human potential and advancement of civilization. In fact, the poor need their own serial more now than they needed them some decades ago.

We are all unaware of the importance and relevance of serials as communication tools. We know that serials provide a platform for the communication of new knowledge, the exchange of experience and the propagation of new ideas. The publication of serials, regularly and frequently, ensures that they publicize material submitted to them relatively quickly. Although some serials, especially those originating from poor countries, are

increasingly being criticized for slowness in publishing, they are nevertheless important tools which can speed up development in these countries.

A national or local serial of a poor country is a vehicle by which the results of research and the writings of scholars in the country are made readily available to the people who live in that country. It encourages researchers and others to publish the result of their work in its pages thereby making them readily available to the country's reading public. While it is accepted that a lot of information appearing in journals and serials published by the rich countries is relevant to the poor, we have to realize that a large majority of the people of the poor countries still do not have access to the handful of major libraries stocking these materials. Their source of information will therefore be the local serial. Moreover, as pointed out by Tacotlian[5], recently, the perception of the development process of many developing countries has changed in that many no longer strive in reaching the stages achieved by industrialized countries, but rather they are seeking development which is endogenous, that is, more closely related to their own cultures and traditions. An external serial and one that does not empathize with a poor country will surely not be able to help much in transmitting the relevant information.

Finally, the poor countries need their own serials mainly because they have got to create their own local information systems and services and also build national or regional databases for easy management of their own information resources. In so doing, a poor country will be in a position to identify alternative courses of action and work out solutions to its own problems.

It is well known that the world information market is dominated by multinational firms of the industrialized countries. These institutions supply complete ranges of information porducts and services including hardware and software; information sources

such as books, serials and various bibliographic tools; satellite and other communication facilities for information transfer and document delivery; and information analysis, repackaging and referral services[6]. The industrialized countries are also developing large databases and have new advanced information handling technologies which place them in a dominant position in the information business. However, while these developments mean a lot to mankind, they have very little significance to poor countries, for the moment at any rate. Besides the needs and problems of poor nations not being taken into consideration when designing these "international" information systems and services, much of the information activity in the industrialized countries is carried out on a commercial basis, thus creating economic problems of paying for the materials and services provided especially where a hard currency is involved. All these setbacks mean that poor nations must strive and build national information systems and services that will facilitate the flow of information, increase national capabilities for innovative development and creativity and make full use of national and international information resources. This being the case, I cannot see how one can ignore national serials in the Third World countries.

## NATURE OF SERIALS OF THE POOR

Mr. Chairman, all along we have spoken as if the poor have no serials. We have indicated that poverty is partly caused by lack of information and poor utilization of existing resources. We have shown that the availability of serials, especially national serials, is crucial to the economic advancement of the poor nations. In a real sense Mr. Chairman, the poor have their own serials. These serials may not be that many, and up to the standard required internationally, because of the numerous problems besetting them. But they are there and are communicating ideas to at least a small group of people. In Tanzania, for example, after the formation of the National Bibliographic Agency in 1982, the National ISDS Centre

identified as many as 860 serial titles which need to be controlled bibliographically. A previous study by the author showed that serials of Tanzania were increasing to an annual average of 25 titles, which was an annual growth rate of about 1.5 percent.(7)

On the nature of serials of the poor, Williams sets the pace by saying that: "The image of African periodical publications in the minds of librarians and others seems to be strongly influenced first by the large number which produce one or two issues, never to reappear, and secondly by extremely irregular publication record of many that survive"(8). This depressing characteristic signals what one should expect when dealing with serials of the poor.

While the majority of world serials published today are on science and technology, many serials of the poor are in social sciences and humanities. Science and technology is a recent undertaking in many Third World countries. Only a handful of primary serials, that is, those that publish fundamentally new contributions to knowledge, exist in poor countries. While primary serials are a very small proportion of the whole serials field and non-primary serials form a large group, poor countries need more primary serials than they need non-primary ones. Non-primary serials, produced for information, recreation, reporting current events, and repackaging fundamental knowledge in one form or another for a variety of tastes and intellectual levels, are useful only if a country has first and foremost its own primary serials. Otherwise, non-primary serials will tend to repackage external information only, thereby ignoring local research findings.

The small number of primary serials in many poor countries is a reflection of little research going on in these countries and also of the presence of a small number of learned societies. Davinson(9) points out that primary serials are predominantly owned by learned societies or produced under government sponsor-

ship of some kind. This being the case, they tend to be long lived, reflecting the sounder financial basis they enjoy as products of the learned societies and government institutions. So to increase the number of primary serials in poor countries one has to think about how to organize professional associations and also seek government assistance in publishing these serials.

Non-primary serials, as indicated earlier, form the bulk of serials of the poor. These include newspapers, house journals and reports - for both internal and external uses trade and professional serials, leisure and recreational serials - which are financed largely from advertising revenues, and a few current affairs journals which devote time and space to close examination of issues involving important political, social, and professional events as is the case with associations newsletters. House journals, issued periodically and primarily not for profit, are probably the largest category among non-primary serials of the poor countries. Published by public service institutions, industrial undertakings, state and quasi-state organizations, these serials are issued chiefly as public relations tools. In this group, however, poor countries lack what we know as the 'alternative press'. Altaf Gauhar, Secretary General of the Third World Foundation, indicates that: "The poor nations are not serious about new international information and communication order. They are only serious in as far as questioning the monopoly of the international multinational news agencies. But new international information order means that editors and journalists within their own nations must be free to move around, get information, publish it without feeling that if they publish it they are going to get arrested. Unless you have this, you cannot have a new information order."(10) The development of an 'alternative press,' which provides different modes of thought from both the formal current affiars press and the pathological secrecy of the bureaucracy, will take time to reach full maturity in poor countries.

Many poor countries also lack technical serials. Though non-primary, technical serials bear the closest relationship to primary periodicals. Many technical serials have the important function of re-presenting and interpreting material originally published in primary periodicals, while some carry important commissioned articles of no less significance than those typically included as primary serials. The reasons advanced for lack of primary serials seem to apply to technical serials as well.

But serials of the poor are not only characterized by lack of certain types. Many are distinguished by inferior production standards and quality, irregular frequency, poor subject and editorial coverage, and total lack of promotional and distribution strategies. While many reasons for this state of affair will be presented later when discussing problems affecting serials of the poor, it can generally be pointed out that in a country where there is virtually no serial publication expertise and where editors, with the exception of newspaper editors, are purely amateurs, one can hardly expect high calibre serials. Serials of the poor should therefore be viewed in the context of these weaknesses and problems.

## PROBLEMS AFFECTING SERIALS OF THE POOR

In 1975 at a publishing conference for Africa in Nigeria, Geoffrey Williams, then editor of an academic journal remarked: "The attempt to establish in Africa, at the present time, an academic journal for an international readership is an uphill task"[11]. This statement is even more valid today than it was nine years ago mainly due to numerous problems besetting the activity of serial publishing in Third World countries. Problems affecting serials of the poor stretch all the way from the author to the reader of a serial publication. Lack of adequate infrastructures and technical know-how are major stumbling blocks in the rapid development of serials of the poor.

In Tanzania, none of the established commercial publishing houses supports or publishes a serial publication. This means that nearly all serials produced lack capital and publicity backing. Also, as indicated earlier, the majority of serials originating from poor countries lack professional editorial expertise. Most editors attend to the affairs of their serials in their spare time. This kind of arrangement surely affects the development of a journal all along the production stage to the sales and distribution stage. In fact, full time professional serial editors are much more needed in poor countries, where production and distribution infrastructures are rudimentary, than in advanced communities where printing and sales activities of serials are smooth. For example, because printers in poor countries lack experience in serial printing, familiarising the printer with the requirements of, say, specialized serials requires much closer liaison between the editor and the printer than would be the case elsewhere. Now, this kind of arrangement is difficult to execute if editors of serials are mainly volunteers.

Trained and competent editors are not only required in improving the quality of Third World serials, they are also needed in bringing back the authors confidence in poor countries' serials. It is a known fact that contributors from poor countries prefer submitting their manuscripts to established foreign serials. While it is conceded that this preference is because local serials have limited distribution channels, serials of the poor will not improve by being deserted. There is, therefore, a need for competent editors to work closely with authors in ensuring that ideas are locally published and distributed to an international audience. For poor countries do not lack competent authors, they lack the infrastructure.

Another major infrastructure causing problems to serials of the poor is the one related to the printing industry. Shortage of paper and incessant machinery breakdowns due to lack of spare parts may be the cause of severe limitations on the

range of serials coming out of the printing presses of the poor. In nearly all developing countries, the printing industry is an imported technology. Machinery used is all manufactured overseas, and nearly all raw materials that feed the machines, like paper and ink, are imported. This means that the industry is totally affected positively or negatively by the economic situation prevailing nationally and internationally. Four months ago the publishers of a government-owned national daily newspaper of Tanzania were forced, due to shortage of paper, to print 30,000 copies instead of the previous small run of 80,000. Now, if a national government newspaper lowers its circulation because of paper shortage, what chance does a serial published by a professional association have in coming out of the presses? Printing delays are common features in poor countries. Some serials published quarterly have been delayed as long as two years. Such delays have made editors of some serials opt for cheap means of reproduction like duplicating and so on.

Linked to the problem of printing is the problem of rising costs in terms of editorial, administrative, printing and promotion expenses. Increased cost of paper, high production costs and expensive postal and transportation charges makes the availability of serials of the poor too expensive for ordinary citizens. A low income worker in Tanzania spends 5 per cent of his monthly salary purchasing a daily newspaper. On the other hand, he spends 7.5 per cent of his salary on house rent.

Expenses of serial publishing have reached a point whereby it is sometimes cheaper to import books and serials from rich nations than producing them locally. Indeed, while the subscription price of serials of the rich nations increases annually at a rate of 14 per cent,[12] those originating from poor countries have an annual increase rate ranging between 50 and 100 per cent. Sometimes this increase is completely unpredictable thus making it difficult to fix subscription rates.

Reasons advanced for increased high costs of serials of the poor include inflated charges to cover scarcity of materials and continuous machinery breakdowns, and also economies of scale, whereby the small market size can only justify a low press run which results in higher unit prices. Yet higher costs reduce the already small market size for serials. A vicious circle is therefore present in publishing and selling serials of the poor. First, publishers cannot publish huge press runs of serials and risk going bankrupt because the serial buying public is still small. Readership on the other hand cannot grow quick because the reading habit cannot be sustained by a steady stream of new publications. In countries where illiteracy and semi-literacy are predominant, one has to strike a balance between serial prices and the need for increasing readership. Publishing of serials in many poor countries ought really be an integral part of the intellectual and cultural system of these countries. In other words, the activity should be given direct state and institutional support. This is one way also of lowering the high mortality rate of journals of the poor countries and create confidence among subscription agents who have lately been frustrated in distributing Third World serials.

The high mortality rate among Third World serials is making subscription agents from industrialized countries reluctant to handle subscriptions of local periodicals and newspapers. Complaints have also been advanced that publishers and producers of serials of the poor do not even answer letters let alone provide information about new and forthcoming publications. These complaints are valid because the poor countries do not have established machineries of serial distribution and sales. Only a handful of serial titles have circulation managers and subscription departments. Subscription agents and jobbers are more or less non-existent. All these constraints, together with problems of road, rail and postal communication makes distribution of serials of the poor, internally and externally, very difficult indeed. But despite all these problems, sales and distribution of Third World serials

could greatly be improved if they were well promoted and adequate attempts made to control them biblicgraphically.

It is probably fair to say that very little promotion is done for serials originating from poor countries. Displays, advertising and reviewing are constantly for imported literature rather than national materials. There is a tendency, therefore, for editors of serials of the poor to learn various promotion techniques and methods including postal advertising, publicity in other serials, display and interviews, and sending copies to legal deposit libraries. The depositing of serials at national libraries enables proper bibliographic control thereby improving access to Third World serials for the world.

Nearly all developing countries lack an adequate and proper bibliographic control mechanism for their national literary output. A study, conducted by the author in Tanzania,(13) showed that though there were some efforts geared to controlling the current national literature, there was a lack of reliable primary bibliographic data on current publications and little application of internationally recommended standards in bibliographic control. There were also no specialized bibliographic tools, including abstracts and indexes, which gave proper access to national serials and other literary publications. The country did not also participate in regional and international bibliographic programmes. Tanzanian Periodicals,(14) which lists serials published in the country, lacks adequate data elements necessary for identification of Tanzanian serials. Also, the Tanzania Press Directory, compiled by the Information Services Division as a requirement to register newspapers and serials, is not complete. Many serials are not included in this directory.

Libraries, information centres, and all those concerned with information and its dissemination have not done fully what they ought to have done. While the voiced opinion of librarians and information specialists on the lack of use of

information among the people of the poor nations is valid and accepted, it must be recognized that without access to information users cannot make full use of information. It is important to note that effective user access to information resources depends mainly on an excellent system of bibliographic control, a system which not only identifies and lists the serial literature but also provides qualitative evaluations and precise indicators of relevance. The problem is, therefore, to do with librarians and information specialists rather than the users of information. We must realise that access to information and ideas is indispensable to the development of human potential and any efforts we make to control our national literature contributes immensely towards this access. Third World countries must, therefore, draw up and develop proper bibliographic control programmes which will enable adequate utilization of their serial resources.

## WHAT CAN BE DONE

Mr. Chairman, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen. The situation of serials of the poor may look gloomy at first sight. However, a closer examination of the problems and existing publishing structures reveals that some of these problems are surmountable and that the structure can be remoulded in order to improve the development of these serials. The success of serials of the poor therefore calls for efforts on two fronts.

First, it is the responsibility of the international community to facilitate the success of serials of the poor. A group of eminent serial librarians like you here has to ensure that serials of the poor, though in bad shape at the moment, receive attention in acquisition, processing, information storage and retrieval, display and use promotion. We should also ensure that international information systems, programmes and bibliographic databases include materials and resources from poor countries. For, as observed by Savacevic on the perception of the needs for information in less developed countries,[15] poor countries want participa-

tory programmes in which they are partners and have equal rights. They do not want to feel completely dependent on a product fully controlled by one of the developed countries.

Second, it is the responsibility of the poor to develop and advance their own serial publications. Courses and seminars must be organised for editors of various serials with the international community providing the know-how and promoting application of international standards in serial publishing. Since serial, and mainly book publishing, are an integral part of the cultural process in many Third World countries, governments' support must readily be provided to reduce the now high prices of serials. Though there are valid fears that too much government involvement in serials of the poor may reduce the independence of editors in making judgements on the suitability of manuscripts, there are areas where government assistance would not reduce this independence. Scaling down tax on paper to reduce prices and allow serials to reach a wider audience is one of the many suggestions which could be advanced.

Although librarians and information specialists of the poor countries may at times not be able to confront governments on issues pertaining to national serials, they may nevertheless influence governments and all those concerned to think positively on serials of their own countries. Research and studies could be conducted pertaining to output, quality and use of national serials. Results of these studies may be used to show the importance of these resources in information transfer and national development. For we have to remember that, the written word is a relatively new phenomenon in our societies and that a lot of our communications existed in oral form. Efforts are therefore required to prove that the future lies in the written word.

Librarians and information specialists of the poor must also seriously get involved in programmes aimed at promoting

their own serials. Review magazines and selection tools which cater for nationally or regionally published books and serials could be started by librarians as a way of promoting sales. For the duty of the librarian in a poor country is not only receiving published serials but also ensuring that serials are published and that they will keep or being published. Formation of national, regional and international programmes and systems which promote serial publications and participation in them must also be encouraged in poor countries. The experience of Tanzania in participating in the International Serials Data System (ISDS) proves that such programmes enable national serials to be known easily and correctly internationally. The arrangement also makes countries develop capabilities for bibliographic control of their own serials and also pin-point weaknesses existing in local serials while recording them through the international system.(16)

## CONCLUSION

Mr. Chairman, in this paper we have attempted to show the importance of national serials and why poor countries need their own serials. We have also examined the nature of serials of the poor and tried to identify some of the problems affecting them. We believe, Mr. Chairman, that, librarians and information specialists have a duty to ensure that serials of the poor develop as important information tools enabling poor countries to increase national capabilites in development. Librarians from poor countries must, therefore, develop a love for their own serial publications, while those from industrialized countries must learn to bear with the problems affecting serials of the poor. For it is through this passion and mutual relationship that we can have a wider and better balanced diffusion of information in all parts of the world.

REFERENCES


1. NYERERE, Julius K. Melbourne speech on Poor-Rich interdependence. In ALEY, Juma Twenty one years leadership contrasts and similarities. Dar es Salaam: International Publishers Agencies, 1984. pp. 116-126.

2. NYERERE, Julius K. The plea of the poor; Address given by President Mwalimu J.K. Nyerere at Howard University, Washington, D.C. 5th August 1977. Dar es Salaam, 1977. 16p.

3. TACOTLIAN, Jacques. Information for development: the role of Unesco's PGI. Unesco Journal of Information Science, Librarianship and Archives Administration, 3(3) July-September 1981: 146-158.

4. SAMAHA, H. A study on the application of scientific and technological information in development: field study in Tanzania. Paris: Unesco, 1978.

5. TACOTLIAN, Jacques. op. cit., 1981, 147.

6. Ibid., 149.

7. MLAKI, Theophilus E. Bibliographic control of the current national literature of Tanzania. M.L.S. Thesis, Loughborough University of Technology, England. 1981. p. 84-85.

8. WILLIAMS, Geoffrey J. Academic serial publishing in Africa. In OLUWASANMI, E. Publishing in Africa in the seventies. Ile Ife: University of Ife Press, 1975. pp. 329-345.

9. DAVINSON, Donald. The periodicals collection. London: Andre Deutsch, 1978. p. 39.

10. Interview with the Sunday News of Tanzania on April 29, 1984.

11. WILLIAMS, Geoffrey J. op. cit., 1975, 343.

12. WEBER, Benita M. The year's work in serials: 1982. Library Resources and Technical Services, July/September 1983, p. 244.

13. MLAKI, Theophilus E. op. cit., 1981

14. TANZANIA LIBRARY SERVICES BOARD. Tanzanian Periodicals. Dar es Salaam: The Board, 1975. 14p. (Mimeographed).

15. SAVACEVIC, T. Perception of the needs for scientific and technical information in less developed countries. Journal of Documentation, 36, 1980, 220.

16. MLAKI, Theophilus E. ISDS and ISSN in Tanzania. Dar es Salaam: Tanzania Library Services Board, 1983. 6p. (Mimeographed).

IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE, NAIROBI 1984

Division: Collections and Services

Section: Acquisition and Exchange.

38-ACQUI-1-E

1984

170

# Acquisition of Library Material in Kenya: Problems and Prospects

BY

Joshua Reuben NJUGUNA
Senior Assistant Librarian
Kenyatta University College
Nairobi. Kenya.

*For internal use only:*

To be brought to meeting no:

73

Remarks:

to be presented orally [X]

for distribution only [ ]

# ACQUISITION OF LIBRARY MATERIAL IN KENYA: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

## INTRODUCTION

Acquisition of appropriate material in a library is so vital to the success of any library system that it cannot be treated lightly. Indeed, it determines to a great extent the success or failure of any library because all other library activities revolve round the stock the library pocesses. Yet, important as it is, it is the bane of many a librarian in the developing world including Kenya.

Over 90% of all books acquired by libraries in Kenya come from overseas countries, mainly the U.K. and U.S.A. One of the reasons for this is that indigenous publishing in Kenya is still not sufficiently developed. This in turn results in there being no sufficiently well-organized bookselling businesses in the country.

As a result of the prevailing publishing and bookselling situation in Kenya, most libraries are also forced to turn to overseas agents for the supply of books and other material that they require. And because of the long distances between Kenya and the main book centres, considerable delays are experienced from the time an order is dispatched to the time the publications are received. An order sent to a U.K. supplier, for instance, takes on average three months before the first consignment from the order is received in the library by surface mail. Some orders take much longer.

Not only are there long delays but the long distances also effectively rule out the possibility of using on approval supply arrangements which would facilitate inspection of publications before purchasing. These are effective in developed countries where the bulk of publishing is carried out but cannot be operated in Kenya owing to the time taken to receive and return book parcels.

Rare books which are advertized from time to time in second hand booksellers' catalogues are also difficult to get since an order from Kenya for such material is more often than not received by the bookseller after the material has already been sold.

Problems of Communication

Lack of effective communication between the overseas book suppliers and libraries in Kenya is another major problem in acquisition of stock in Kenya. Once an order has been dispatched to a supplier, a prompt feedback is usually received from the most efficient. Some suppliers also promptly send titles which they have in stock. But as stated elsewhere in this paper, it takes no less than three months to receive books from Great Britain which is the main source of publications acquired by libraries in Kenya. But titles not held in the suppliers' stocks are often very poorly reported on. The main problem here is that when the suppliers are tracing these publications, they do not keep the library properly informed on a regular basis about the state of the publications. And when information is supplied, it leaves much to be desired. Such statements as "not yet published; reprinting; out of print; or out of stock" without further explanation only leaves the librarian at a loss to communicate a satisfactory answer to the library patron who may have suggested the purchase of the title. Overseas suppliers would make the work of librarians much easier if the state of each unsupplied order could be regularly and sufficiently reported on so that librarians could in turn keep their patrons well informed about the publications they have requested. Information as to when a publication is expected to be published, reprinted, or in stock (if only temporarily out of stock) would be invaluable.

Foreign Exchange Problem

Owing to insufficient foreign exchange in Kenya, it is a requirement of the Central Bank of Kenya that for all foreign orders exceeding Ksh.4,000/- (Approximately £200), an import licence must be obtained first. Of course a book order worth Sh. 4,000/- is very small at current prices of books. If therefore the import licence is to be avoided, the library would have to place hundreds of small orders every year and this would mean a lot of paperwork.

The problem with the import licence is that it takes a month on average to be approved and this is a serious delay considering the speed at which publications are going out of print nowadays, together with the other delays inherent in the ordering system.

Non-Payment of Invoices

While it is logical to expect a library to pay promptly for publications which have been supplied, this unfortunately is not always the case in Kenya.

The main reason for delayed payment of invoices is bureaucracy brought about by the number of organizations and individuals involved in the payment process. Some of the organizations involved in the payment process include:- the library itself which vouches receipt of the goods; the finance department of the organization; the organization's commercial bank; and finally the Central Bank of Kenya. Within each of the organizations, several individuals are involved in one way or the other with the payment process.

The requirement by the Central Bank of Kenya that address labels on wrappers in which the goods are received in the library accompany invoices as proof of actual receipt of all invoiced items before permission to pay foreign suppliers can be granted is a real handicap. As all suppliers fulfill most orders in parts depending on the availability of the publications ordered, the library receives many small book parcels throughout the year. Therefore, the number of wrappers to be dealt with is large and so there is a possibility of some getting mislaid or lost altogether in the process, which in turn causes further delay in paying for the books.

When long delays in settling bills become the order of the day, even the most generous suppliers lose their patience and in particular when large amounts of money are involved. They eventually decide to supply no more orders until the outstanding bills have been settled.

To enable libraries to acquire publications with minimum delay, the Central Bank of Kenya should modify considerably restrictions on book imports. Indeed, the Central Bank of Kenya should abandon altogether the need for import licences for publications required for educational and research purposes since these are themselves a means of development.

Problems Caused by the Suppliers Themselves

Overseas book suppliers too at times contribute to the slow settlement of bills. This happens when some items listed on the invoice are inadvertently not delivered, or a wrong title is supplied instead of the correct one, or even an imperfect copy is received. Worse still, a whole consignment may go astray in transit and is therefore never received though this occurs very occasionally. When any of these things happens, the invoice cannot be paid untill the problem has been sorted out.

But generally, some good suppliers accept responsibility immediately and either issue a credit note or send a replacement copy of the item in question and this certainly expedites settlement of the invoice. Unfortunately, some suppliers do not seem to understand the implications of paying for non-received, wrong, or imperfect items and engage in protracted correspondence with the library which only helps to aggravate the delay in payment.

Some demand the return of the item in question before they can issue a credit note and the item can take up to three months by sea to be received by the supplier. If all the suppliers could be more understanding, delays caused by these minor mistakes could be greatly minimized to the mutual benefit of both library and supplier.

Problems of Obtaining Material from Local Suppliers

As noted above, local publishing concerns in Kenya are not sufficiently developed which in turn means that well managed, well developed and sufficiently stocked bookshops are lacking. The situation is aggravated by the lack of sufficient capital to enable booksellers in the country to import foreign publications in sufficient quantities. This is in fact the main reason why libraries in Kenya have to obtain foreign publications direct from overseas suppliers instead of through bookshops in the country. Nevertheless, local booksellers keep complaining that libraries are denying them essential business by ordering publications direct from overseas instead of doing so through them. But libraries cannot, without serious consequences, order overseas publications through local booksellers. Firstly, booksellers in Kenya are subjected to the same stringent Central Bank of Kenya import regulations as the libraries themselves. It would therefore take a library a much longer period of time to receive publications ordered through local bookshops than it does when ordered direct.

Secondly, as already noted above, local bookshops lack sufficient capital to import publications in large quantities such as may be required by libraries throughout the country.

4 (12

Price Inflation

Yet another factor which deters libraries from ordering foreign publications through local bookshops is that of price inflation. Local booksellers are known to charge more than double the published price of an imported book to boost their profits, although they normally get a big trade discount of between 35%-50% from publishers themselves. The increases are ostensibly meant to cover such things as packaging and postage, insurance, handling charges, etc.

But what the booksellers tend to forget or choose to ignore is that those libraries which have the experience of acquiring publications direct from overseas suppliers know the percentage charges that go to packaging, postage, etc. and can therefore easily tell when the price of an imported publication is being unreasonably inflated. Indeed, there are some overseas suppliers who give up to 10% discount on the published price of a book and will also not charge the so-called packaging, postage, insurance, etc.

Unfortunately, prices are not only inflated for imported publications but also for locally published ones on which they claim to receive no more than 20% trade discount. But the amount of inflation for local publications is normally lower than that for imported ones. As a result of this, libraries tend to go direct to the publishers for their local requirements thereby by-passing the booksellers, and consequently denying them what they rightly consider to be their essential business.

However, as a result of wide-spread complaints from parents of school children, schools themselves and the general public that book prices were prohibitively high and that not many people could afford them, the Kenya Government recently came to the rescue of book buyers including libraries by curbing book prices. During the 1983/84 budget speech, the Minister for Finance directed that books were to be included in the class of commodities subjected to price control.

Following the Minister's directive, the Government Price Controller has taken steps to control the price of books - both imported and locally-published. The price of a locally - published book is now determined by the Price Controller, on being given certain facts concerning the cost of producing the book. It is therefore no longer left to the whims of publishers themselves.

The published price which must be printed on the book itself is the retail price and must not be exceeded by the bookseller. Ofcourse both the publishers and booksellers have been up in arms against this practice as it has only come to drastically cut down the very high profits they have been making at the expence of book buyers. But again, the effects of price control are yet to be realized since members of public are still voicing their disatisfaction.

Lack of Publicity and Selection Tools for Locally-Published Material

Locally-published material also suffer from lack of proper publicity as many local publishers do not produce catalogues of their publications regularly and systematically. For this reason, it often takes libraries a long time to know of the existence of most local publications. The reason given for this state of affairs is lack of capital. A few of the locally-published books are, however, reviewed in such popular magazines as The Weekly Review and some newspapers.

The problem of publicity is aggravated by the lack of current national bibliography in the country. If one were in existence, it would certainly act as a great aid to both book selection and hence acquisition.

It is, however, gratifying to note that the Kenya National Library Services (KNLS) has embarked on the production of a retrospective national bibliography going back to 1980. It is hoped that the K.N.L.S. will eventually embark on the production of a current one which is even more important for acquisition purposes.

Acquisition of Publications from other African Countries

Acquisition of publications from other African countries is also a problem as bibliographical control in most of these countries is no better than in Kenya. The problem is further compounded by the poor state of the publishing and bookselling trades in most of the countries. This in turn results in lack of wide publicity of newly published material. Libraries in Kenya therefore come to know of the existence of most of these publications through reviews in learned journals or when they are cited in other publications.

When an order is sent to a book supplier in another country, one rarely receives any kind of reply. In such circumstances, the option left to librarians in Kenya is only to obtain African published material from overseas suppliers some of whom have endeared themselves to librarians in Africa through their willingness and ability to secure publications from many corners of the world. This of course doubles the delay in the receipt of the publications as these have to make two journeys - for example - one to Britain and then to Kenya.

Exchange of Publications Programme

Many libraries throughout the world are known to build their stocks through exchange and gifts programmes. Some world - famous libraries acquire as much as 15% of its stock through exchange every year. But the exchange programmes operated by most libraries are restricted to publications generated by the libraries themselves and also those generated by the parent organizations where libraries belong to some organizations such as research institutes, colleges and universities etc.

Here in Kenya, Kenyatta University College (K.U.C.) Library has acquired through exchange and gifts nearly 38,000 volumes out of its total stock of 150,000 volumes built over a period of just under 12 years. This clearly indicates that the K.U.C. Library acquires roughly 25% of its stock every year through exchange and gifts.

In view of all the problems discussed earlier in this paper, a comprehensive exchange of publications programme between libraries in Africa would ease out acquisition problems relating to Africa produced publications since most of the libraries experience similar problems as

those experienced in Kenya, particularly that of foreign exchange. The comprehensiveness suggested here is one which includes commercially - published materials in addition to those generated by the libraries and their parent organizations. A library in Kenya for instance can get into an exchange programme with a library in - say Zambia and hope to receive all material of interest to it published in Zambia through the latter. Similarly, the library in Zambia would receive all relevant Kenyan material through the Kenyan library. The two libraries would then become exchange partners. The question of "relevance" presupposes some selection before the acquiring library can decide what to request from its exchange partner. Each library would have to establish exchange partnerships with as many libraries as there are countries it is interested to obtain material from, but one library in each country will do.

One problem, however, likely to be met with in this exchange programme is that of unequal monetary value of material used for exchange. This is partly because the exchange partners may not be interested in material of equal monetary value and partly because there already exist differences in the national publishing output. Therefore, a method of redressing the inevitable imbalance would have to be worked out. One solution to this problem would be the supply of some publications in duplicate or multiple copies. After all, many libraries acquire even through purchase more than one copy of some titles. Alternatively, any unsettled imbalance at the end of the year can be carried over to the following year. Unfortunately, this is likely to cause a build up of the imbalance year after year and therefore the purchase of any materials which offset the required balance may have to be adopted as a last resort. Nevertheless, most of the publications would be expected to be acquired on exchange rather than purchase.

Although this programme may sound difficult to implement it is a very realistic proposition and can certainly be made to work for the mutual benefit of all concerned. Firstly, the publishers' annual output in the whole of Africa is still relatively low as can be deduced from the African Books in Print. Secondly, not all the materials published in one country would be of interest to a given library in another country. As already mentioned, selection would have to be exercised and this of course would further contract the number of publications to be handled on an exchange basis.

The greatest advantage of the proposed exchange programme is that it does not involve foreign exchange - this being a major problem in many developing countries of Africa. Again, many publications known only to librarians in their own countries would be placed at the disposal of librarians in other countries. Indeed, there seems to be no better method of comprehensive acquisition of African published materials than the exchange programme proposed here. But again, purchase of the older and rare publications which have found their way to overseas countries will still remain the principal method of acquiring such materials.

Barter Between Booksellers

In the prevailing economic conditions in Africa which are aggravated by the non-convertibility of African currences, one is tempted to go a little further to suggest an exchange of publications programme between booksellers themselves. Publications required by a bookseller in one African country from another African country can be exchanged for books needed in the other African country.

However, for this programme to succeed, a lot more publicity of publications will need to be carried out. Publishers throughout Africa will have to put a lot more promotional efforts than they have done todate. They will be called upon to produce catalogues, booklists and other announcements more regularly and systematically than they have done so far. Booksellers deal in commodities produced by publishers and if the existence of these commodities is to be brought to the attention of possible consumers, publicity is a must. Publishers' representatives too should pay regular visits to booksellers in their own countries to familiarize them

with what they have produced lately or what is about to come out. Books can only be bought if they are available in bookshops. Publishers therefore must readily supply these to booksellers with minimum delay when requested. They should offer better trade terms to their biggest outlets - the bookshops - to enable them to remain in business.

Also, a regularly up-dated directory of publishers for each country will be invaluable.

Each country too will need to produce its national bibliography on a regular basis and circulate the same as widely as possible to other African countries.

On their part, booksellers will need to produce lists of publications they hold in their stock regularly. They should send out these lists to their exchange partners in other countries. On the local scene, booksellers should be prepared to supply publications on approval to libraries which is commonly done in developed countries.

The inflation of prices which is still rampant should stop otherwise libraries will continue to by-pass book - sellers and get their local publicat ons direct from the publishers.

There are all the posibilities of developing and promoting an intra-African book trade since the stage has already been set. The Organisation of African Unity holds its summit once a year in an African Capital and this is a time when an African Book Fair can take place in the same capital. During such a fair, booksellers should display as much as possible of their nationally - produced literature for booksellers in other countries to see. This way, many consumers would be reached through the booksellers.

There is also a general trade fair known as the All Africa Trade Fair held in rotation in an African capital once every 4 years. This again is a time when booksellers can display publications from their countries.

On a regional level, the recently concluded agreement commonly known as the Preferrential Trade Area (PTA) offers other possibilities of trade in books within the 14 countries of Eastern Africa who are signatories to this agreement. All these forums, if properly utilized will enable booksellers in Africa to meet and get to know one another better and thereby pave the way for the exchange of publications programme advocated in this paper. Libraries in turn will have publications from other African countries on their doorsteps which will be a great step towards solving acquisitions problems currently experienced in many countries of Africa.

## REFERENCES


1. BANDARA, S.B. Dormant exchanges supported by a system of tokens: a suggestion . Libri, 1981,31,316-322.

2. DIPEOLU, J. O. Problems of acquiring African published materials: the experience of African University libraries. In: Publishing in Africa in the seventies: proceedings of an international conference on publishing and book development held at the University of Ife, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, 16-20 December 1973. Ile-Ife: University of Ife Press, 1975, 135 - 142.

3. MAGUGU presents lenient budget. The Weekly Review, June 24, 1983, 12- 13.

4. NJUGUNA,J.R. Acquisitions in Kenya. Outlook on Research Libraries, 1983, 5, 14 - 17.

5. NOTTINGHAM, J. Too many people chasing too few books. In: The development of information - an African approach: proceedings of the Third International Standing Conference of Eastern, Central and Southern African Librarians, held at the Kenya Science Teachers College, Nairobi, Kenya, August 27 - September 2, 1978. Nairobi: KLA, 1979, 69-73.

6. ORIMALADE, O. Nigerian book trade and possibilities for inter-African book trade.(Unpublished), 1984.

7. PRINTING and publishing: waiting for more government expenditure. The Weekly Review, March 30, 1984, 34-36.

8. ZELL, H. M. ed. African books in print. 2nd ed. London: Mansell, 1978.

IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE NAIROBI 1984

Division: Collections and Services

Section: Acquisition and Exchange

170

39-ACQUI-2-E

# Acquisitions in the developing countries: problems and possible solutions; the Jamaican experience.

by

Stephney W. L. Ferguson
Director
National Library of Jamaica
Kingston, Jamaica

rna se only:
brougl to meeting no:

..... 3 .....

reser d orally [x]
ribu on only [ ]

Jamaica is a small English speaking island in the Caribbean which became independent from Britain some 22 years ago. Unlike many small developing countries, Jamaica has been fortunate in that it possesses the infrastructure for the development of a national library and information system.

It is served by a comprehensive public library system. The Jamaica Library Service established in 1949 serves a population of 2.2 million through 704 service points consisting of 13 parish libraries in the chief towns and 161 branches in smaller township. A fleet of 14 Bookmobiles provide service to over 500 smaller communities in rural and urban areas. Special service points are operated in hospitals, prisons and inaccessible villages and this is supplemented by a free postal service to the homebound and to rural residents. A Schools Library Service is also operated by the Jamaica Library Service on behalf of the Ministry of Education to over 900 primary and secondary schools.

In addition to the above, the island is served by a network of small independent special libraries offering varying levels of service to government ministries and agencies as well as to the private sector. The University of the West Indies with its system comprised of a main library, medical and science branches and special departmental libraries on the Mona Campus in Jamaica, the libraries of other academic institutions and the National Library of Jamaica complete the infrastructure.

The problems associated with the acquisition of library materials have been present for a long time. Ten years ago at a meeting of librarians in Austin, Texas at the "Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials", I presented a paper entitled "Problems in the Acquisition of Foreign Materials for Libraries in Jamaica".[1] At that time the problems identified were associated with inadequate budgets for

purchasing materials, undue delays in receiving materials ordered from overseas, unsuitability of materials acquired unseen, based on reviews and publicity brochures, limited choice in local bookshops and the difficulties faced in identifying materials produced locally and within the region. It would have been pleasant to record 10 years after that most of these problems have disappeared. On the contrary, the problems involved in acquiring library materials in a small developing country such as Jamaica seem to have become entrenched and even to have increased to the point where the ingenuity of the librarian is taxed to the limit in efforts to acquire library materials in order to satisfy the needs of clients.

## MAIN SOURCES OF LIBRARY MATERIALS IN JAMAICAN LIBRARIES

Jamaica's long association with Britain, its proximity to North America and the fact that it is an English speaking country has resulted in the British and North American markets being the main sources of supply for English as well as foreign language materials. Indigenous publishing, both locally and regionally within the Caribbean although relatively underdeveloped is also an important source for the acquisition of library materials. The acquisition problems are to a large extent related to the sources of origin of the materials and are generally speaking common to all types of libraries. The following analysis therefore examines the problems in relation to sources of origin.

### LIBRARY MATERIALS ORIGINATING IN METROPOLITAL COUNTRIES, GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTH AMERICA

#### Foreign Exchange

The over riding problem involved in acquiring materials from these sources is limited foreign exchange. The world economic recession and internal economic problems have severely affected the country's foreign exchange reserves. Books and other library materials must therefore compete with basic foodstuff, oil and raw materials for the limited foreign currency available. Inspite of the importance attached to education and the provision of information through libraries it is not difficult to understand why foreign exchange requirements for library materials must wait until other basic necessities are met. In addition

the problem is compounded by lengthy bureaucratic procedures involved in processing applications for foreign exchange and even when permission is granted, there is no guarantee that hard currency will be obtained from the commercial banks. The problems caused by this chronic shortage of foreign exchange for library materials is more acute in libraries financed wholly by government whether they obtain supplies through local booksellers as in the case of the public library system or through the Supply Division of the Ministry of Finance which is responsible for procuring goods and services on behalf of government organizations. The University of the West Indies, is a regional organization with access to funds outside of Jamaica and does not have this problem to the same degree, but all other libraries experience difficulty in obtaining foreign exchange to purchase materials.

Import and Trade Restrictions

Publications and other library materials have at times been placed n the list of items requiring specific import licences. This practice btained as recently as April of this year when the following items were ncluded on the list:"printed booklets in the form of magazines, rochures, pamphlet and leaflets only , magazines only, except professional journals, trade and sports journals , children's picture ooks and painting books". Processing of applications for a licence to nport is a time consuming procedure and can take anytime from 3 to 6 nths or more.

Import quotas allocated to booksellers have also been used to regulate importation of materials but even when quotas have been granted nport licences may not be available due to shortage of foreign currency. edit extended by overseas suppliers is normally allowed for 6 months. normal practice however booksellers are unable to settle accounts in ss than 9 months. This has resulted in a tightening of credit facilites by overseas suppliers and interest charges which range between 6 and 25% take up a significant portion of the funds available and ectively reduces the quantum of materials which can be acquired.

## Other Restrictions

Jamaican law prohibits the importation of pornographic publications, books on black magic and witchcraft, but apart from these categories there is no official censorship.

## Import Duty and Customs Regulations

Duty is payable on publishers catalogues and audiovisual educational materials but not on printed publications, but the procedures for customs clearance of materials is time consuming.

## Rising Prices versus Shrinking Book Vote

The high and ever increasing price of books published in metropolitan countries is yet another problem which affects the acquisition of library materials. This coupled with diminishing budgets due to internal economic difficulties has severely affected the provision of library materials. In addition the diminishing value of our local currency against the US dollar and the attendant increases in freight and insurance charges effectively reduce the already inadequate book vote.

## Undue delays in receipt of materials ordered

Materials ordered are shipped by surface mail as the expense involved in obtaining supplies by air would make the cost prohibitive. This results in undue delays and a time lag of 6 months or more is not uncommon. Serials holdings are badly affected as a result of this problem as it becomes impossible to claim missing issues since quite often issues are not missed until after the claim period has expired.

## Selection Sources and the Attendant Problems

The bibliographic tools for selecting materials are the well known ones used in British and American libraries. There is no such thing as the approval plan however, and except for the limited stocks carried by local booksellers most materials are acquired unseen.

This practice sometimes result in the problem of unsuitable material being acquired. Material which may be recommended as being suitable for retarded readers or specific age groups in the case of children's literature in metropolitan countries may be of little interest to the Jamaican reader being outside of his experience. Quite often books ordered using these tools, when received and examined, fail to live up to the expectations raised by reviews and publishers brochures.

Local Booksellers

The Jamaican book buying public is relatively small. Since booksellers whether in developed or developing countries anticipate demand and stock titles which are expected to sell readily, it follows that the range of titles carried by the Jamaican bookseller is limited, being influenced by the anticipated market which is largely for textbooks and popular novels or children's books. Unlike their counterparts in developed countries the librarian is therefore unable to acquire a wide range of library materials from local bookshops.

ACQUISITION OF MATERIALS FROM EXTRA-REGIONAL DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Acquisition of library materials which originate in developing countries outside of the Caribbean is equally problematic. The problems described above in relation to foreign exchange, trade and other restrictions and delays in receipt of materials apply equally. In addition, to these problems however is that of knowing what is published in these countries. Unfortunately, inspite of the many similarities which exist in the historical and socio-economic areas the lack of direct communication links is a very real barrier and materials which may be of interest to Jamaica is quite often missed. The relatively low development of the publishing and book trade industries, the absence of trade journals and current national bibliographies all combine to present access to library materials which are in many cases more relevant to the needs of Jamaica than those which originate in metropolitan countries.

## PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE ACQUISITION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS FROM NATIONAL AND REGIONAL SOURCES

Library materials whether they originate within Jamaica or in the wider Caribbean area present similar acquisition problems and have therefore been examined together.

### Difficulty in identifying what exists

This is perhaps the most pressing problem and is caused by a number of reasons.

- Ineffective or a total absence of legal deposit legislation
- The embryonic state of the publishing industry and the consequent absence of local or regional book trade journals
- Delays in issuing local and regional bibliographies
- Inadequate bibliographic control of government publications
- Unpredictability of serials publications.

The above problems are made even more difficult by the following:-

- Limited prints runs which result in the item being out of print by the time it is identified
- Relatively poorly developed communication links between the countries of the region which result in undue delays in the ordering and supply of publications. The poorly developed transportation links between the countries of the region inhibits contact and it is often speedier to travel to metropolitan countries as to communicate with our professional counterparts in these countries then to make contact with those in our own geographical region. Materials shipped can take as much time to arrive as those despatched from metropolitan countries
- Underdeveloped nature of the book trade industry which results in difficulties in identifying reliable suppliers of indigenous publications

Difficulty in obtaining government publications even when they have been identified due to the fact that they are often not for sale, and are therefore unpriced. This makes it difficult to obtain multiple copies which could be used in exchange programmes. In addition to all of the foregoing there is the ubiquitous foreign exchange problems and the attendant trade restrictions when regional materials are to be acquired.

Other General Problems

Other general problems which are not related to the sources of origin of library materials, also exist and are equally frustrating for the acquisitions librarians.

Lack of Publications Budget

Many of the small government funded libraries are not allocated specific budgets. Acquisition of library materials is therefore done on a haphazard basis depending on the whim of the accounting departments. In the absence of a specific budget other budgeted expenditures take priority.

High Cost of Selection Tools

The high price of the general and specialized bibliographic tools for selecting materials present a problem for the many small independent special libraries. Materials are therefore quite often acquired influenced by the glowing publicity materials issued by publishers. This results in the acquisition of unsuitable materials.

Inability to Acquire and Supply Timely Information

Many of the small special libraries particularly in government ministries and departments are operated by untrained staff. The lowly position of such staff within the organization structure results in a lack of awareness of the plans and programmes of the department and the

consequent inability to anticipate and acquire library materials to satisfy the information needs of the library clients on a timely basis. The above list of problems is indeed formidable. Problems in all walks of life are easy to identify - what is difficult is the identification of solutions. The solutions proposed in this paper are influenced by current practice and the recommendations emanating from a seminar held in Jamaica 2 years ago on "Acquisitions Policies and Procedures for Libraries and Information Units".[2]

All the recommendations have not yet been implmented but they are offered here as possibilities to be considered by other developing countries which may be faced with problems similar to those being experienced by Jamaica.

## POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

### Sharing of Resources Through Networking

Jamaica is currently implementing an ambitious plan[3] designed to promote the sharing of resources through networking. Implementation is still in the early stages, but already libraries have been grouped into sectoral networks based on subject specialization and interlending of materials is coordinated through a national referral service based on the National Library of Jamaica.

### Exchange Programmes

Arising out of the "Seminar on Acquisitions Policies and Procedures for Libraries and Information Units"[4] held in 1982 exchange programmes were identified as a partial solution to some of the problems faced by libraries. The University of the West Indies Library operates a successful programme which was responsible for procuring half of its book acquisitions in 1981. Since 1982, many more libraries have embarked on the development of exchange programmes, however the need for a central clearing house or Exchange Centre has been identified and the responsibility for its establishment has been recognized in the National Library's development plan. In the meanwhile, the National Library offers a

limited service in this area.

## Cooperative Acquisitions

Cooperative acquisitions of library materials was one of the proposals discussed at the "Seminar on Acquisitions Policies and Procedures for Libraries and Information Units".[5] It is envisaged that such a programme could be initiated by the focal points of the sectoral networks being developed and would involve the acquisition of expensive general materials for use throughout the networks. Practical steps are yet to be taken to implement this proposal for the new networks however. Within the older established networks viz the Jamaica Library Service which is a centralized public library system, cooperative acquisitions has been the normal practice and within the University of the West Indies library system procedures exist to minimize unnecessary duplication of materials. The National Library of Jamaica which is the chief focal point of the library and information system has been building up a collection of expensive reference works in support of the services offered by the smaller libraries. A formal programme of cooperative acquisitions is yet to be planned however, in order to ensure that the system works effectively.

## Regional Programmes for Cooperative Acquisitions

Within the region, cooperative activity in the area of acquisitions has already been initiated[6] and the regional Association of Caribbean University and Research Libraries (ACURIL) has been promoting cooperative acquisitions programmes in which some Jamaican libraries participate. The work of the ACURIL acquisitions committee for English speaking areas[7] can assist in significantly reducing the problems particularly for materials originating within the region as also the activities of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) through the Documentation Centre of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad.[8]

## The Role of International Organizations

### Gifts

International organizations have played an important role in ameliorating the problem of acquisitions of library materials in Jamaican libraries. Organizations such as the Ranfurly Foundation based in Britain and the Canadian Overseas Book Centre have contributed significantly in this area, to all types of libraries in Jamaica. More recent donations have been attracted through the activities of The Brothers Brothers Foundation of the USA and Rotary International Clubs which has resulted in substantial benefits to the public library service. Foreign embassies have also made significant contributions to various libraries.

The practice so far however has been one in which donations are negotiated and arranged on a one to one basis from specific organizations to specific libraries. The need for a national clearing house has been identified. This would provide information on the availability of gifts and arrange for the acquisition and distribution of these especially to smaller independent units which may not be able to establish contacts with international donor organizations. The responsibility for this activity has been recognized by the National Library in its development plan.

### Unesco Coupons

The role of Unesco and its coupons scheme which enables many countries with foreign exchange problems to purchase books, publications and scientific materials is well known. For many Jamaican libraries this has been the only ray of hope which has enabled the continued acquisition of library materials. Even this solution however has posed problems for Jamaica, as since 1983 we have been advised that these coupons would no longer be available. We can only hope that this is a temporary situation which will be changed in the near future.

### Commonwealth Library Association (COMLA)

The Commonwealth Library Association comprised of library associations of British Commonwealth countries is an untapped potential vehicle

for solving some of the problems relating to acquisition of library materials from extra regional developing countries. At the moment some countries exchange their national bibliographies, but much more will have to be done with respect to identifying reliable suppliers and obtaining timely information about current publications.

## Securing Changes in Government Policies and Procedures

The above solutions must be complemented by changes in those government policies and practice which create problems in the acquisitions process for libraries. Such changes can only be secured as a result of strong representations to government. A strong and effective professional association of librarians which is able to influence public opinion is therefore an important requirement. Such a body should not only seek to influence public opinion, but should bring to the attention of government the benefits which can be obtained from acceeding to the various international agreements adopted by Unesco which will facilitate the acquisition of library materials. The Bierut Agreement 1948, the Florence Agreement of 1950 and its protocol of 1976 and the Multilateral UNESCO Exchange conventions 1958 all come readily to mind.

In conclusion I must express my pleasure that the Acquisitions Section of IFLA has seen it fit to focus attention on this problem as it affects developing countries particularly at this time when IFLA is meeting in a developing country. I must also record my gratitude to the Section for inviting me to present this paper highlighting the problems, and the solutions being developed in Jamaica. I hope that I have been able to increase your understanding of the problems we face and that through IFLA, efforts can be made to assist developing countries to find effective solutions.

## REFERENCES


1. Ferguson, Stephanie "Problems in the Acquisition of Foreign Materials for Libraries in Jamaica" in Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials (19th:1974: Austin) Final report and working papers. Vol. 2., Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Library, 1976, p.31-35.

2. Acquisition Policies and Procedures for Libraries and Information Units (1982: Kingston). Proceedings of the Seminar on... held in Kingston, Jamaica Feb. 15-16 and June 4, 1982; edited by Hyacinth Brown. Kingston: National Library of Jamaica, 1982.

3. Plan for a National Documentation and Library System for Jamaica Kingston: National Council on Libraries, Archives and Documentation Services, 1978.

4. Acquisition Policies and Procedures for Libraries Proceedings.

5. ibid

6. Jordan, Alma "Planned Library Resource Sharing and Cooperative Acquisitions in the English speaking Caribbean" in IFLA/UNESCO Pre-session Seminar for Librarians from Developing Countries (3rd: 1977: Antwerp University). Resource sharing of libraries in developing countries; edited by H.D.L.Vervliet. Munchen; New York: K.G. Saur, 1979, p.46-54.

7. Moss, A. "The Cooperative Acquisitions Programme of the ACURIL Acquisitions Committee" cited in Jordan, Alma "Planned Library resource sharing and cooperative acquisitions in the English-speaking Caribbean" p.49.

8. Primus, Wilma "The Caribbean Documentation Centre (CDC): the Caribbean information system and CARISPLAN" in CARINET: newsletter of the Caribbean Information Network. Kingston: Dept. of Library Studies, U.W.I. Vol. 1 no.2 (Dec. 1982), p.1-4.

IFLA

1984

IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE, NAIROBI 1984

Division: Collections & Services

Section: Serial Publications

98-SER-4-E

# Theory and Practice of Serials Control and How Your Subscription Agent Can Help

by

Arnoud DE KEMP
Marketing Manager Swets & Zeitlinger B.V.
Lisse, The Netherlands

Since July 1st, 1984 Director of Marketing & Sales J. Springer-Verlag
Berlin, Heidelberg, New York, Tokyo

For internal use only:
To be brought to meeting no:
.....152.....
Remarks:
to be presented orally ☒
for distribution only ☐

Summary

This presentation is based on a series of workshops and lectures for professional library staff as well as students all over Europe.
Fundamental aspects of serials handling and control is discussed, focussing on information, administration, registration (and claiming) and special services for developing countries.
The line of approach is that of the specialized sub and agencies, working with many publishers on behalf of an international library clientele.

A good library collection is and will remain indispensable. New technologies will arrive and be used for such literature and/or data where it is either not possible or too slow to rely on print. But this will be supplementary to, rather than a replacement of, printed information.
The level of scientific inquiry will continue to depend on the availability of a good collection of primary literature.

One very important aspect is that libraries make their printed collections available either free of charge or at a minimal cost. All of the new technology media are more expensive and their costs have to be met partly or in full ("free versus fee").

A good organisation for recording, retrieving, holding and loaning the collection is increasingly important because of the sheer volume of material involved.

Within the library collections serial publications have an important function, because journal articles play a highly significant role in the transfer of information, in the establishment of new knowledge and the exchange of experiences. Therefore more and more information is being published in serials and more and more serial publications are being published.
There is a great variety of learned and specialised serial publications. Periodicals are the most important representatives of a wide assortment of daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly publications, yearbooks, annual reviews, conference reports, numbered monographic series and handbooks with annual indexes and supplements. The most important STM publishing countries are the U.S.A., England, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland and France.

Serials may be distinguished by contents and level, topicality, quality, area of specialization, language, type of publication, form and frequency of publication.

The reputation of the publisher plays an increasingly important role, e.g. names like Elsevier and Springer guarantee quality products. We also see that the english language plays a dominant role as far as international communication is concerned.
A number of criteria are applied to acquisition policy. Libraries evaluate price, quality, the number of relevant articles and actual reader-interest when choosing. Decreasing library budgets, serials catalogues and holding lists, inter-library loans, etc. also influence acquisition. Some publications are never requested by users and these titles can block the acquisition of more relevant titles. Some serials become too expensive and thus may be cancelled. The serials department is in a continuous state of flux.

Serials are a long-term acquisition and require more money, labour, and space than monographs. They also require a different management as they represent a much more complex world. Compared with other library operations, the serials department is a mosaic where many variable and difficult, often detailed, data aspects are being recorded locally. Librarians would like to see more uniformity in the publication of journals and serials. The editorial policy of a publisher is frequently ambiguous. Data of publication are not always stated. Sometimes the format is changed or the annual index is missing without any explanation at all, which has implications for binding. The International Standard Organisation (ISO) has laid down and published standards for abbreviating journal titles, for the lay-out of journals and for the presentation of articles in journals.

It is difficult to get the right bibliographical information in time since practically all aspects can change and do change indeed, including publisher, title, frequency and price. Information about titles is mainly collected from announcements, advertisements, price lists, catalogues and publishers invoices. North American publishers have adopted the practice of sending "renewal notices" with inforamtion about the price and the number of issues in the forth coming period.

The standard bibliographies are as a consequence almost always out of date. Abstracting and indexing services, both in print and on-line do provide a great deal of information about articles, authors and subjects but not about journals as such.
It is no accident then that specialized subscription agents are used ever more frequently to provide information. For commercial reasons they monitor the appearance of new titles and title changes, and of course know all about prices, currencies and publishers' routines. They provide subject information to libraries in the form of catalogues, regular information on new titles and splits, changes and mergers of existing titles. Bibliographical changes, cessations, delays are continuously monitored. Up to date bibliographical information is essential for the efficient functioning of a library.

Larger libraries have separate departments for the administration of serials, the ordering and renewing, the checking, claiming and completion of the collection. Almost every library uses a code system of one sort or another. Many different details are recorded for many different purposes:

- bibliographical history
- acquisitions purchase/exchange/free/membership
- acquisition history: orders and renewals/suppliers
- receipt of issues as they appear
- claims, with reason for claiming

- financial administration and control
- budgetary considerations
- circulation and location within the library
- details of binding

Modern serials management requires more details for statistics, control and collection development. In this area, automation has not yet (or scarcely) made its mark. But almost all major subscription agencies are working on software packages varying from Kardex check-in facilities to complete turnkey library systems.

Indeed there is an amazing resemblance between a library's serials department and a subscription agent's administration. This may necessitate further cooperation and exchange of resources and knowledge between libraries and their suppliers.

Some points of analogy:
1. the collection of information/cataloguing
2. ordering and renewing
3. check-in and claiming
4. purchase administration
5. reporting, statistics and other management aspect.

In most cases publishers correctly send the subscriptions that have been ordered, renewed and paid for on behalf of libraries by subscription agencies. (Recent investigations in England and the USA and information from the major STM publishers show that about 85% of the many millions of subscriptions are handled by agents). Occasionally, however, periodical issues will not be received on time, subscriptions will be received incomplete or issues do not arrive at all. A library should, therefore, carefully and continuously administer the receipt of subscriptions.
There are several books and many articles that provide useful information about serials librarianship, but the principles and methods of serials check-in and control are mostly covered superficially.

On the occasion of the presentation of a paper to IFLA members we would like to give some practical advice to librarians, based on many years of in-house experience.

Information

Serials (card)files should not only present currently known data but also provide past data. In addition these files should be able to refer to future, and consequently, unknown data.

To list some of the more important elements:

Title description
Short title
Alternative title
Abbreviated title
Subtitle description:
- title of a particular volume/part
- part of a group title

Former title
Date of change
Last volume/first volume in a year
Editors' name(s)
Authors' name(s)
Language
Multiple language editions
Translation
Translation references
Geographic editions
Name of publisher
Address of publisher
name of distributor if different
Address of distributor
Format
Number of pages
Version: printed/film/fiche
Positive/negative
Period of publication
Number of volumes per year
Number of issues per year
Number of issues per volume

Sequential numbering
Special volumes
Special issues
Special parts
Combined volumes
Combined issues
Additional volumes
Additional issues
Separate index
Multiple year index
Short description
Classification: UDC/Dewey, etc.
Codes like LC, OCLC, ISSn, ISBN, CODEN, PICA, KNIGA
First year of publication/ceased
Temporarily suspended
Resumed publication
Location and coding, e.g. shelfmark number
Circulation and patrons
Binding details
order date
order code
Renewal date
Standing order/One year only/Multiple year
Direct order/Membership/Exchange/Deposit
Name for membership
Subscription price in original currency
Seamail/Airmail and postage rates if separate
Exchange rates
Converted purchase price
Supplier/Agent
Invoice details
Payment details
Claimed issues
Duplicate issues
Damaged/incomplete issues

Supply of information about serials should be a major element of any subscription service offered by your supplier. Some agents have set up reporting systems, which provide new data on a regular and customer-oriented basis.

Checklists of subscriptions, subject searches, price analysis reports, quotations and price comparisons all belong to the components of a "complete" subscription service. Sample copies are very important for the perusal and ordering of new titles.

Orders and renewals

Keywords are: complete and in time. Most subscriptions are entered for the period of one full calender year. But a number of publishers do not register orders on a calender year basis and supply for the period of twelve months after receipt of the order or renewal. Furthermore, it can take 6 to 8 weeks for publishers to start a subscription.

For these reasons it is very important that information on the librarys' order is complete. Increasingly publishers only start or renew subscriptions after receipt of payment. Late orders, late renewals, late payments and late transfer of subscriptions are the cause (of all the trouble) with interupted subscriptions. Some agents may be able to offer a special renewal service for your library and fill the gaps by providing single issues, duplicate issues from other libraries or from their own stock.

Check-in and claiming

Monitoring all subscriptions is a must. In practice this means: knowing your subscriptions. This experience can only be gained by many years of practical work. But your suppliers may help here tremendously. The help may vary from claim reports, warning lists to complete agency check-in services.

By no means all issues arrive on time, complete and undamaged. A particular problem is to know which issues should have been received as all too often claims are required to be made with the publisher within the time period allowed. Extras like title and contents page, indexes, supplements or combined issues often cause considerable difficulty before the journal is complete and ready to be sent to the binder.

What is or what should be claimed?
The most common types of claims are a result of:

- skipped issues
- delayed commencement of new or renewed subscriptions
- delays in publication and distribution
- duplicated issues
- incorrect or incomplete addresslabels
- repeated claims
- receipt of damaged or incorrectly printed issues.

Administration

Your supplier may be able to provide your library with a special invoice plan. Invoices may contain detailed information on titles, periods, prices and currencies. Some agents can provide detailed analyses of the price records of your subscriptions, e.g. over the last three years, showing the influence of price and currency fluctuations, postage and handling charges on the cost or your serial titles.

Cooperation in general

Almost all libraries with a larger number of journal subscriptions will find cooperation with a subscription agent to be labout-saving and providing a number of helpful extra benefits.
Libraries ask agents to pay regard to specific management, administrative and data processing requirements. The agent may be and often indeed is able to help and develop new procedures. The agent as acquisition and distribution information broker is in the best position to provide sound and up to date advice.

Additional services

Libraries differ in purpose and organisation. It depends on your library which priorities and requirements are important. Apart from the traditional subscription service offering ordering, renewing, paying and invoicing, claiming and the supply of information, additional services may be available or requested.

## Visits & Training

Your library may be visited by experts to provide advice, training meetings may be set up or workshops may be organized. In our case, hundreds of librarians pay a visit to the Netherlands to visit our headquarters combined with visits to some of the general universities or specialized scientific, technical or medical libraries.

## FAST-service

The additional FAST-service has been developed to meet with the following requirements:

- guaranteed arrival of all issues at regular intervals (no mail problems and no claims anymore)
- check-in can be handled by non-professional staff so that the profesional staff are free to perform other library tasks
- significant reduction of check-in procedures
- uninterrupted supply of all serials
- extensive management reports
- carefully packed and 100% insured.

FAST is a serials management system designed to supply journals to libraries worldwide in a very reliable and convenient manner. British and Continental European publishers send their journal issues to our office in Lisse, the Netherlands; U.S. and Canadian publishers send the issues to our office in Berwyn, U.S.A., resulting in domestic publishers' prices and postage rates. In both offices the incoming journals are unpacked, sorted and checked-in fully automatically The computer system controls, allocates, registers, claims and reports.

Due to the short mailing time from publishers to the receiving offices, combined with the FAST control system, claims can be made far more timely and effectively, at the same time meeting publishers' requirements and giving them all the details for efficient processing.

For the libraries the door-to-door delivery means a very convenient and controlled method of supply. Methods and frequency of shipping are of course determined by the library, whereby airfreight-with-customs-clearance is the most attractive option.

On behalf of a demanding clientele, more than 100,000 subscriptions are now managed by the FAST service. We have over twelve years of operational experience with FAST. As a system it still is in the forefront of current developments in subscription services, whereby decentralized offices are able to purchase and collect locally with all the advantages of better control, lower prices and rapid delivery.

S.O.S.-service

We would like to conclude with mentioning our S.O.S.-service for urgent claims, sample copies, recent back issues, etc. S.O.S. is a unique service as it combines automated claim routines with a stock of over 110,000 current issues. Annually, approximately 10,000 issues are sent to libraries at no charge.

Lisse, July 1st, 1984

IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE NAIROBI 1984
Division: Collections and Services
Section:

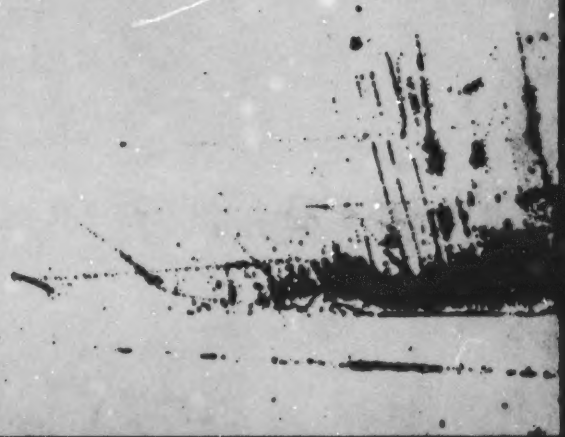
113-COLL-1

# The Problems of African Acquisitions: The Experience of the Nairobi Field Office of the Library of Congress

by

James C. ARMSTRONG

Field Director
U.S. Library of Congress, Field Office
Nairobi, Kenya.



clmp no. 54

• presented orally

# The problems of African acquisitions: the experience of the Nairobi Field Office of the Library of Congress

Those who are occupied with and write about the acquisitions of publications from Africa, tend to use the word "problems" in the titles of their own professional publications. A reader new to this field might readily conclude that problems persist and that they are peculiar to Africa. The acquisitions problems are indeed perennial, but they are not really different, except in detail, from those encountered in other parts of the developing world.

While each African country presents its own mix of acquisitorial challenges, these typically include the lack of adequate current information about a country's publishing output, often signalized by the absence of any current national bibliography, a publishing scene characterized by a weak commercial sector and in which official publications of limited distribution may predominate, and a feebly developed book trade, in which the economic incentives to deal with libraries abroad may be small. It is still broadly true, that the commercial book trade in most African countries is not so organized as to be able to serve the acquisition needs of research libraries abroad or locally for that matter. As Malcolm McKee has recently noted these problems are easier to state then to solve.[1] That they have proven so intractable for acquisition librarians is no reflection on the lack of effort or resourcefulness of the latter; it is rather that they spring from the very real difficulties endemic in publishing, bookselling and bibliographic work in each of the countries involved.

The present paper will not rehearse these familiar problems, as they have been frequently described in the literature, but rather will concentrate on the experience of one institution's efforts in coping with these challenges.[2]

Following a preliminary survey made in May and June 1966 the Nairobi office of the U.S. Library of Congress was established in July 1966 in support of the National Program of Acquisitions and Cataloging (NPAC), itself inaugurated in the same year. Initially, a dozen countries or territories were included in the Nairobi office's area of operations: Ethiopia, French Somaliland (now Djibouti), Somalia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, Mauritius and Réunion. Subsequently Sudan and the Comoros were added, joined in 1978 by Rwanda and Burundi. Personnel initially consisted of an American field director supported by a local staff of eight (now twelve). Monographic and serial publications from these countries were acquired and forwarded to the Library of Congress in Washington. Congruent with the aims of NPAC the office has regularly provided preliminary cataloging for the publications it acquired. Beginning in 1968 the office published its Accessions list:Eastern Africa. Initially a quarterly, ALEA now appears six times a year and is supplemented by and Annual Serial Supplement and Annual publishers directory. In 1976 the office began to acquire Eastern African publications for the New York Public Library. Since then Yale Law Library, the National Agricultural Library and the Center for Research Libraries have been added as participating institutions.

Materials acquired for LC include commercial, academic, official and some religious publications. Non-book materials, notably phonodiscs and cassettes, posters and diapositives are also collected.

The materials for LC acquired by the office are done so under the guidance provided by the acquisition policy statements issued by the Library of Congress. While authorizing a rather comprehensive range of publications to be acquired, it is noteworthy that certain categories of publications are indeed excluded, for example primary and secondary school textbooks (with few exceptions) and related pedagogical materials, translated works, as well as publications in the fields of technical agriculture and clinical medicine.

...3



148

School book publishing is of course a highly important publishing field in several countries in the region but is unreflected in the Library's collections. Technical agricultural publications (also a very productive category in the region) are indeed collected by the office, but on behalf of the National Agricultural Library.

The operations of the Nairobi office, as of the other five Library of Congress overseas offices, are coordinated by the Overseas Operations Division. The office is in frequent contact and consultation with other divisions of the Library of Congress, especially the African/ Middle Eastern Division, the Order Division, the Exchange and Gift Division and other units within Processing Services.

Publications acquired by the office on behalf of LC are forwarded to the Library at frequent intervals. Except for those materials being processed, no collection is kept in the Nairobi office. Cumulative card files of materials acquired by the office since its inception are of course maintained, as are serial records for the 1800 or so serials currently received. From January 1981, the preliminary cataloging done by the Nairobi office has conformed to Anglo-American cataloging rules, second edition.

Acquisitions - on a piece count basis - by the office have climbed from 12, 732 per year in fiscal year (FY) 1968 to the current level of approximately 22,000 per year. The following table gives an overview of the past seven fiscal years:

NAIROBI OFFICE

ACQUISITIONS FOR LC

| | PURCHASE | GIFT | EXCHANGE | MONOGRAPHS | NEWSPAPERS | SERIALS | MISC. | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1977 | 17,777 | 1,394 | 7,453 | 1,921 | 13,551 | 10,581 | 571 | 26,624 |
| 1978 | 17,996 | 1,543 | 6,257 | 2,578 | 12,658 | 10,342 | 218 | 25,796 |
| 1979 | 15,623 | 1,935 | 5,600 | 2,437 | 14,923 | 5,660 | 138 | 23,158 |
| 1980 | 16,801 | 1,733 | 6,329 | 2,368 | 11,715 | 10,710 | 70 | 24,863 |
| 1981 | 15,522 | 1.434 | 4,740 | 2,009 | 12,525 | 6,951 | 211 | 21,696 |
| 1982 | 14,305 | 1,209 | 5,528 | 2,600 | 11.523 | 6,864 | 145 | 21,132 |
| 1983 | 15,621 | 1,523 | 4,782 | 1,593 | 13,297 | 6,907 | 129 | 21,926 |
| Total | | | | | | | | 165,195 |

Of these piece-count totals approximately 10% are monographs, approximately 50% newspapers, and about 40% are other serials and miscellaneous non-book materials.

On a country by country piece-count basis, the following figures, for FY1983 are representative:

| | Countries covered | FY 83 |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Burundi | 834 |
| 2. | Comoros | 0 |
| 3. | Djibouti | 124 |
| 4. | Ethiopia | 2,646 |
| 5. | Kenya | 3,705 |
| 6. | Madagascar | 1,975 |
| 7. | Malawi | 510 |
| 8. | Mauritius | 1,955 |
| 9. | Mozambique | 174 |
| 10. | Réunion | 1,131 |
| 11. | Rwanda | 174 |
| 12. | Seychelles | 820 |
| 13. | Somalia | 1,268 |
| 14. | Sudan | 1,235 |
| 15. | Tanzania | 1,622 |
| 16. | Uganda | 1,497 |
| 17. | Zambia | 2,018 |
| 18. | Zimbabwe | 238 |
| | | 21,926 |

Receipts from individual countries are subject to many variables, some reflecting changes in the levels of publishing activities, but also a host of seemingly extraneous factors which can impinge adversely or otherwise on the acquisitions process. These include the stability of the political situation, the prevailing economic climate, the level of morale in government offices, etc.

...5

The relative (and it is only that) acquisitorial success reflected by the above figures is due to a combination of several factors. One is undoubtedly the central location in the region of the office. Nairobi is the communications and transportation hub of Eastern Africa, a fact which facilitates access by post, telephone and air transport. It makes the scheduling of regular acquisition trips both practicable and budgetarily feasible.

The acquisition trips are a vital part of the program both from an informative and acquisitive aspect. On the average each country (with one or two exceptions) is visited about once a year. Visits to the publishing centers in the region permit many first-hand discoveries of new publications and their immediate acquisition, whether by purchase, exchange or gift. There is no substitute for these visits. A typical acquisitions trip permits dozens of contacts with publishers, librarians, academic and government officials to be made and/or renewed. Not all of these will be 'productive' in the sense of resulting in a new acquisition in hand. But they do contribute to a continuing sense of awareness of the evolving publishing scene in that country and enable a more focussed and efficient acquisitions effort to be mounted. Reports on acquisitions travel in the region appeared regularly in LC acquisition trends (1978-82) and now appear in Africana libraries newsletter.

An important point related to acquisition trips is that continuity and experience tell heavily. E.g., my first visit to Burundi in 1977 was not particularly productive; we (i.e., the Nairobi office) had not had previous contact with that country, and I had few fresh leads to publications. I allowed too little time (two or three days), mistakenly thinking this would be ample. My subsequent trips have been longer (four to five working days), and my knowledge of the Bujumbura publishing scene has improved each time, making each successive trip more efficient and more productive.

...6

The Nairobi office is served by local acquisitions representatives in several of the larger (from a publishing standpoint) countries in the region: Sudan, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Madagascar and Uganda. Others, including Zimbabwe, which is not currently covered by the office, will be added to this list. Local representatives are invaluable in countries where there is an active newspaper scene as in Madagascar, or where local conditions are such that daily on-the-spot representation is otherwise essential, as in Ethiopia. Local representatives facilitate exchange relationships, and can provide news of current publishing developments in their countries in addition to performing more routine acquisitions work. The ideal local representative is one who is knowledgeable about the local publishing scene, a responsive correspondent, and resourceful in the constant quest for publications. We do not employ local representatives in small (from a publications standpoint) countries such as Burundi, Rwanda and Somalia. For these we depend on correspondence, and regular acquisitions trips, to each country.

An effective acquisitions effort must be based on an accurate and timely knowledge of what there is to acquire. The methods used by the Nairobi office include those followed by acquisitions departments the world over, namely the searching of (where they exist) publishers' catalogs, national bibliographies, library accessions lists and so on. However, in the regional context these do not constitute an adequate body of information and an intensive effort is made to learn about new and forthcoming publications through a variety of other means. These include the regular scanning of selected newspapers and other serials for mention of new publications, conferences, literary developments, etc. The office receives, mostly by air, more than one hundred newspapers from the region, of which perhaps a score routinely feature news of publications. Probably no other library has such access to the wealth of information (widely dispersed though it is) available from the daily and weekly press of the region. Visitors to the office sometimes bring news, or examples, of new publications in the region. As noted above, frequent acquisition trips by office staff and the employment of local representatives constitute major sources of current publishing data which are not widely utilized by other libraries.

Even with knowledgeable and capable local representatives and a better access to available sources of information on new publications than is possible for many other libraries, we are often frustrated in our attempts to acquire East African publications, particularly if multiple copies are desired. An obvious constraint on any acquisitions effort is the real availability of a given publication. If we are too late in our knowledge and our attempt to acquire, i.e., if the publication is already out-of-print, then obviously we cannot acquire it. Often a government department is willing to make one copy of a document available to LC, but will feel that our requests for multiple copies for other libraries are excessive. A good measure of the seriousness of this latter problem is to be seen with our experience in acquiring monographs for NYPL. NYPL's collection profile for East African monographic publications is broadly similar, though not quite identical, to LC's. Yet our rate of success in acquiring monographs for NYPL is only about 70% (over five years) of those acquired for LC. That 30% gap represents a measure of difficulty encountered in acquiring only a second copy.

Through its Accessions list:Eastern Africa (ISSN 0090-371X) which is distributed world-wide to about 700 recipient institutions, the acquisitions of the office become widely known. Indeed the Accessions list is a basic tool for those librarians, both in the region and further afield, who wish to be informed on recent publications emanating from the region. The bibliographic information contained in ALEA is often the first such news of a given publication received by readers of the list. The Annual Serial Supplement (ISSN 0192-7388) lists all serial titles currently received by the Nairobi office. Deleted are previously listed serial titles known to have ceased or suspended publication, as are titles which have been inactive for prolonged periods. The Annual Publishers Directory,(ISSN 0145-8736), lists publications whose monographs and serials have been included in the year's bimonthly Accessions list and in the Annual Serial Supplement.

...8

In these lists, the number assigned to some publications is the number by which the corresponding Library of Congress printed card may be ordered from the Library of Congress Cataloging Distribution Service. However, preassignment of a card number does not guarantee that cards will be available, and conversely, non-assignment of a card number does not preclude the availability of printed cards. The bibliographical data incorporated in ALEA is also included in the Joint acquisitions list of Africana compiled by the Melville J. Herkovits Library of African Studies at Northwestern University.

As an acquisitions tool for other libraries, the utility of ALEA is enhanced by the promptitude with which materials are acquired by and cataloged in the office, the resulting entries published in ALEA, and distributed to recipients. There are inherent delays at each stage of this process and some potential for improvement. Throughput studies currently in progress will aid us in identifying and minimizing some of these delays, which will result in greater timeliness.

**********

## NOTES

1. Malcolm D. McKee, "Library acquisition of Commonwealth and Third World literatures in English: the problems of acquiring material published in Africa with particular reference to countries which produce a considerable number of English language publications", Conference on the acquisition and bibliography of Commonwealth and Third World literatures in English, 21-22 October, 1982 Proceedings London, Commonwealth Institute, 1983, p. 172.

2. For recent summary articles, see Eva-Maria Rathgeber "Africana acquisitions problems: the view from both sides", Library acquisitions: practice and theory, 6, no. 2 (1982) pp. 137-148, and Hans E. Panofsky "Acquisition of Africana", ibid., pp. 123-128.

IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE, NAIROBI 1984
Division: Collection and Services
Section: Rare & Precious Books

121-RARE-2-E

# THE BRITISH LIBRARY'S AFRICAN RESEARCH COLLECTIONS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICAN STUDIES

I R WILLISON
British Library Reference Division
London, U.K.

*For internal use only:*
To be brought to meeting no:
. . . 113 . . . . . .
Remarks:
To be presented orally ☒
For distribution only ☐

# THE BRITISH LIBRARY'S AFRICAN RESEARCH COLLECTIONS AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICAN STUDIES

I would like first to outline the historical development of African Studies and its interaction with the development of the African research collections in the British Museum Library, now part of the British Library Reference Division. Then I would like to deduce from that history suggestions for the future development of the Library's African collections, in the international as well as national context.

I should add that this present paper is a report on work in progress. A revised version will be presented at the British Library Colloquium on African Studies next January. This we hope will be the first in a series of colloquia not only in the United Kingdom but also in other countries, involving scholars, librarians and publishers working in African studies.

## I

As a member of IFLA and its parent body, Unesco, my Library (like other member libraries, I assume), when it considers the current state of African studies, pays particular attention to the Unesco General History of Africa which was initiated in 1965 and began to appear in 1981. More precisely, the General History, like its complement The Cambridge History of Africa, seems to me to represent the fourth major phase in the development of African studies as a tradition of ordered intellectual concern embodied

in a corpus of literature.

From this point of view the first, and longest, phase may be said to have lasted from the initial, incidental reports on Africa by the historians and geographers of the classical world - Herodotus, shall we say, and Ptolemy - to the more direct accounts by the navigators, merchants and missionaries both of Islam and the nations of early modern Europe. (The chapters in M. Ki-Zerbo's first, methodological volume of the Unesco History by Fage, Djait and Hrbek offer a convenient summary). Nevertheless when, in the latter half of the eighteenth century, the founders of modern European scholarship, such as Sir Joseph Banks, President of the Royal Society and Trustee of the British Museum), in the encyclopedic manner of their classical and mediaeval forbears, reviewed the "circle of our knowledge... of the nature of and history ... of the world", they found that "almost the whole of Africa [is] unvisited and unknown" (I quote from the "Plan" of Banks's Association for Promoting the Discovery of the Interior Parts of Africa, founded in 1788). Thus the sections devoted to Africa in the great, multi-volume Encyclopedie of Diderot and D'Alembert and in the first edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica each amounted to barely half a column. Moreover, the underlying corpus of literature was felt to be both primitive and, where it existed, under-used. As the African Association's Plan stated, "Notwithstanding the progress of discovery on the coasts and borders of that vast continent, the map of its interior is still but a wide extended blank, on which the geographer, on the authority of Leo Africanus, and of

the Xeriff Edrissi [al-Idrisi] the Nubian author, has traced, with a hesitating hand, a few names of unexplored rivers and of uncertain nations...Neither have we profited by the information which we have long possessed, that even on the western coasts of Africa, the Mahometan faith is received in many extensive districts". As a function of this state of affairs, in 1788 the British Museum (by then thirty-five years old), still lacked any copy of the first edition of Leo Africanus and had acquired only seventy or so of the 160-odd pre-1788 manuscripts relating to Africa which it now possesses. Further, the Museum's immediate predessor, the so-called Old Royal Library, which dated from the end of the fifteenth-century, had possessed only four of those seventy manuscripts. It had also lacked any copy of the first edition of Al-Idrisi.

The reasons for this relative blankness in the study of Africa were, I think, four. First and most obvious, the actual evidence necessary to enable the European world of learning to convert the African experience to order had been not only by and large confined to the "coast and borders of that vast continent" but had been also, in the main, merely descriptive of and therefore external to the African experience: a matter of travellers' reports and maps, legendary tales, and so on. The second and related factor, then, was that the world of learning, centred on written books as it inevitably was (and is), had failed to develop the technique required for internal empathy with the predominantly oral traditions characteristic of the vast continent. The third factor was that even when the interior of

Africa had been penetrated intellectually as well as literally, for example by Islamized counsellors at Timbuktu or by Portugese Jesuit missionaries in Ethopia, sectarian blockages had been allowed to prevent their accounts from circulating effectively throughout the world of learning. Fourthly and generally, the world of learning can be said to have simply lacked the will necessary to overcome these various obstacles to reducing the African experience to order. The enterprise had been felt to be peripheral to the central intellectual concerns of Europe and Islam. The experience of Africa has been perceived as essentially and forever exotic : ex Africa semper aliquid novi.

The story of the subsequent development of African studies is the story of the attempt to domesticate (so to speak) this exoticism, by attending to each of these four factors.

II

The second phase in the development of African studies and their corpus of literature may be thought of as setting the groundwork for this domestication; and it may be said to have lasted virtually a century, from the founding of the African Association in 1788 to the Berlin Conference on African Affairs in 1884-5. (In addition to the chapters by Fage, Djait and Hrbek in volume 1 of the Unesco General History of Africa, already cited, I here rely much on Philip Curtin's The Image of Africa, (1965) and Robert July's The Origins of Modern African Thought, (1968)).

So far as the description of the African interior was concerned, by the 1880s the major geographical problems had been solved

through a series of technically and intellectually sophisticated expeditions - by Mungo Park, for example, then by Heinrich Barth, David Livingstone, and on to H M Stanley and Harry Johnston - that were promoted by the African Association, by its successor, the Royal Geographical Society, by the British government, by British missionary societies, and by their European partners and rivals in the common pursuit of consolidating the expansion of European scholarship, as well as European "Christianity and Commerce", overseas.

Secondly, so far as empathetic understanding of the oral traditions of Africa was concerned, by the 1880s the missionary societies in particular had laid the foundations for the systematic European reception of African languages and folklore, from Koelle's Polyglotta Africana and African Native Literature (composed at the Church Missionary Society's college at Fourah Bay, Sierra Leone, and published in 1854) to the first synoptic sketch of the Modern Languages in Africa by Robert Needham Cust, a member of the Church Missionary Society committee, published in 1883. Less direct but eventually no less effective in its impact on African Studies, it was by and large the missionary societies which trained the first generation of African-born scholars and journalists able to begin ordering their own experience in print, and able to initiate constructive debate with Western scholars on the nature of the African identity: for example, James Africanus Horton and his West African Countries and Peoples which appeared in 1868. More subtly still, by introducing the printing press into much of

Africa South of the Sahara and by disseminating translations not only of the Bible but also, in the parts of Africa under Protestant influence, of John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, missionaries are now seen (most recently by Albert Gerard) to have been instrumental in the creation of modern African literatures,thus providing Africans with the most inward mode of all for Africans for to defining their identity both to themselves and the world.(1)

Thirdly, as regards unblocking the circulation of the classic Arabic authorities for African studies, the same philological enterprise that was registering the contemporary African vernaculars was by the 1880s well advanced with editing and translating those Arabic texts hitherto buried in the archives of Europe - largely in the two great centres of post-Renaissance Arabic studies, Paris and Leyden - as well those as of the parts of Africa penetrated by Islam : for example Baron de Lane's translations of Ibn Khaldun and Al-Bakrih that were published in the 1850s, and the great Leyden Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum that began to appear in 1870.

Fourthly, and the ultimate motivation of all this effort, the bringing of Africa into the centre of European intellectual concern was seen as part of the revolutionary project of enlarging the European "circle of knowledge" to include for the first time the whole of the world - India and Australasia for example as well as Africa: the assimilation into one intellectual order of what the standard history of the French Revolution calls

les humanites etrangeres so that we could all be true citizens of the world, Weltburger, and heirs of all the ages. Moreover, it was the philological method or humanistic scholarship - philologia perennis - developed as long ago as Alexandrian times to comprehend the Western classical tradition, and now universalised by the learned societies of Europe and their overseas associates - Sir William Jones's Asiatic Society of Bengal, as much as Banks's Royal Society and African Association in London - that made such intellectual world citizenship possible. In particular it was with the systematization and professionalising of philology as die philologischen Wissenschaften, first in the archetypal modern research university and research library of eighteenth-century Gottingen, and then by Wilhelm von Humboldt in its post-revolutionary successor, the University of Berlin (both Barth and Koelle had been trained in the Gottingen-Berlin tradition - as had the great Australian explorer, Leichhardt) that the sine qua non of the grand intellectual project was perceived to be a corpus of literature systematized into a bibliographical infrastructure equally universal in scope and depth.(2) The great and enduring enactments of this perception were the nineteenth-century national research libraries and their systematically developed African collections: the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris; the Prussian Royal Library in Berlin; the Library of Congress; and in our case the British Museum Library, where for example in 1879 the young Harry Johnston initiated himself into African philology, and to which I now turn.

Unlike the comparatively smooth evolution of the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris from the great Bibliotheque du Roi (which, being part of the main cultural mission of French absolute monarchy, had provided a more than adequate infrastructure for the major scholarly enterprises of the ancien regime such as the Diderot and D'Alembert Encyclopedie) the evolution of the British Museum Library - from the feeble Old Royal Library into the national research library par excellence of Europe - passed through two strongly contrasting stages. These are reflected in the development of its African collections.

The first stage, lasting from the foundation of the Museum in 1753 to the 1840s and 50s, was dominated by the acquisition by the nation en bloc of the great semi-private collections which before 1753 had provided the infrastructure for British scholarship that the Old Royal Library had failed to do. These were, principally, the collections of Sir Hans Sloane (a predecessor of Banks as President of the Royal Society); of Robert and Edward Harley (like Sloane, members of the decentralised cultural-political establishment characteristic of the British, as distinct from the French, ancien regime that had emerged with the English Revolution of 1688-9); and of Sir Robert Cotton (dating from the first semi-private British attempt to emulate the Bibliotheque du Roi in the late sixteenth-century). To them in 1757 was joined the Old Royal Library, to be followed by the even larger semi-private research collections which were developed under the influence of the Gottingen idea - the libraries of Banks himself, of King George III (now called the King's Library), and of Thomas

Grenville. It was these latter collections which on entering the Museum between 1827 and 1847 to some extent precipitated its thorough-going administrative reform and its conversion into the National Research Library.(3) So far as the Museum's Africana were concerned all but four of the seventy or so African manuscripts in the Library in 1757 were from the Sloane, Harley and Cottonian collections (the four, as I have said already, were from the Old Royal Library). Of the first editions of the mediaeval Arabic and early modern accounts of Africa discussed in Curtin our copies are very largely from these pre-1847 collections. Thus we have three copies (from Sloane, George III, and Grenville) of the first edition of Al-Idrisi printed in Paris in 1619. Of the published results of the first generation of systematic African studies initiated in 1788 by Banks's African Association we have, according to the new Nineteenth-Century English Short-Title Catalogue, all three of the only known copies of the Proceedings of the Association, containing the field reports by Park and other explorers, and the analyses of those reports by the cartographer and geographer James Rennell. The copies are Banks's own, George III's and Grenville's; and from the same provenance we have many of Rennell's original working papers.

The second stage in the development of the British Museum Library, which followed the nationalising, so to speak, of the great semi-private research collections, lasted from the late 1840s to the 1880s and involved the taking over of leadership in the strategy of bibliographical cosmopolitanism inaugurated at

Gottingen and Paris. By the end of the nineteenth-century it could be said by the then Keeper of Printed Books, Richard Garnett, that the British Museum Library " now holds the position ... at the head of all the libraries of the world as a that library which has made most progress towards the ideal of a universal library in every department of literature and information". Moreover, in harmony with the historicism characteristic of nineteenth-century humanistic scholarship one of the major elements in this bid by the British Museum Library for leadership had been the realisation, from the outset, of the importance of acquiring the "first productions of the printing press [in each country, no longer as mere] curiosities [but as occupying a] deservedly prominent place in the history of civilisation". (I quote from one of the Museum librarians, John Winter Jones in 1851(4)).

The three executive modes by which national research library collections were developed in nineteenth-century Europe - legal deposit; current foreign and retrospective general purchasing through the book-trade (both derived from the Bibliotheque du Roi); exchange, deposit and donation of official publications (a function of the growth of modern bureaucracy) - benefited the African as much as the other collections in the Museum. Practically all the serious English language monographs on Africa, by Africans such as Horton as well as by missionaries such as Koelle and explorers such as Barth, were published in Britain and were received in the Museum by legal deposit, as were also the increasingly tendentious popular works, such as John

Smith's **Trade and Travel in the Gulph of Guinea** or Robert Knox's **Races of Man**, which Curtin sees as desensitizing our image of Africa (thereby, we might add, setting up problems for the third stage in the development of African studies).

In the case of current foreign-language purchases, we acquired through the vastly more sophisticated book-trade of post-revolutionary Europe (for example, Trubner, Dulau, Payne and Foss in London; Asher in Berlin) not only the products of the new African scholarship in Europe, such as de Slane's translations of Ibn Khaldun and Al-Bakih or Manso's **Historia da Congo. Documentos**, but also more general works. Thus, we acquired through Asher, as they were published, all but three of the many books by the German adventurer and publicist, Gerhard Rohlfs. So far as retrospective purchases were concerned, we at last acquired a copy of the first, 1550 edition of **Leo Africanus** in November 1848 from Payne and Foss. As regards the first productions of the printing press in Africa, and to take the case of Mauritius as an example, we acquired from auction in July 1855 one of the four known copies of the first non-official publication in the island, the Abbe Challan's **Vocabulaire Malgache** (1733), and we acquired from Dulau in July 1890 the only known copy of the earliest series of the first official gazette, **Annonces, affiches et avis divers pour les Colonies de Isles de France et de Bourbon** (1773-75).

The systematic deposit of African official publications began (in principle) with the issue of Colonial Office Regulation no 261 in

1867. This, by including the British Museum within the scope of the Regulation, enlarged what we may call the more strictly imperial archive which for the previous thirty years had been somewhat enclosed within the departments of central government and the Public Record Office. Similarly the Museum librarians capitalised on the concern of central government at the rapid increase in colonial newspapers, which government acquired for current information purposes but which it (and indeed the world of learning at the time) regarded as "of little [permanent] value".(5) Thus the Museum began receiving from the Colonial Office those African newspapers which until 1859 had been deposited in the Public Records Office, and also other African newspapers passed on from the newly formed semi-private, semi-amateur Colonial Institute (now the Royal Commonwealth Society). Of the sixteen African English language newspapers now determined by Robert July to have been significant for the origins of modern African thought we have runs (not all complete, to be sure) of all but three.

In general, an informal imperialism (to adapt a phrase of Curtin's) underlay not only nineteenth-century **Wissenschaft** but also the bibliographical cosmopolitanism that was designed to support its future as well as present needs; and of this imperialism as the source of their effectiveness the officials of the British Museum Library were well aware: "The large increase in the number of publications in the English language on various points of the globe [advised the Keeper of Printed Books, Thomas Watts, in 1868] seems to render it every year more desirable that

care should be taken to bring together the scattered parts of so glorious a whole in one great repository...[with] an ample provision of the vast amount of floating information which [foreign] languages now embody. [This] is an object of importance not only to the student but to the merchant and the statesmen whose purpose the student may effectually assist when the materials are ready to his hand"(6).

Even so, it is important to note that what we may call the imperial book system had from the outset failed at at least one of the main levels of the bibliographical infrastructure for African studies: African printed ephemera, particularly ephemera in the various vernaculars which we have earlier singled out as being of increasing importance for the development of African self-identification and for European empathetic understanding of it (as well as being prime evidence for the history of printing in Africa). The scale of the failure is virtually impossible to determine until the various African retrospective national bibliographies are available; but already in May 1885 Robert Needham Cust had complained to the British Museum that it was "very deficient" in books and pamphlets on and in the modern languages of Africa. It is little consolation to learn from R H Carnie's research on the United Presbyterian Church in Calabar, Nigeria (published in **Studies in Bibliography** in 1973) that the copy of Hugh Goldie's **Principles of Efik Grammar** printed in 1857 at Calabar, which Asher sold the Museum in May 1899, is one of only two known copies, or that we had the unique copy of Goldie's 1852 New Testament in Efik (subsequently destroyed in World War

II), if at the same time we were told that no copies at all are known of the fifteen other products of the Calabar Mission Press. Likewise Albert Gerard's current research on African language literatures suggests that our thirty-odd vernacular translations of Pilgrim's Progress will make up a relatively small proportion of the total corpus which the long-waited bibliography of Bunyan in African translation will in due course no doubt establish.

III

If the second phase was involved in informal empire, the third began with the formalisation of empire at the Berlin Conference of 1884 and lasted till its end in the two decades following the Second World War. However, the effect of the formalisation on the development both of African Studies and of their bibliographical infrastructure - at least in the case of the British Museum Library - was highly ambivalent.

The formal involvement of Europe and Britian in Africa, like the formalisation of the British involvement in India after the Mutiny in 1857, advanced African studies by introducing the hitherto missing element of general historical study (as distinct from geographical or linguistic study): a process that for the British empire as a whole one can date from the publication in 1883 of The Expansion of England by Sir John Seeley, Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge, to the full-scale Cambridge History of the British Empire which was started in 1929 and which was largely conceived and produced by the new Rhodes,

Beit and Harmsworth Professors of Imperial History at Oxford, Cambridge and London. In Africa in particular the new history was from the beginning closely associated with - and gained initial realism from - the new generation of professional colonial administrators brought in after 1885 (and best typified, perhaps, by Frederick Lugard). Harry Johnston published the first version of his **History of the Colonisation of Africa by Alien Races** in 1899, between his commissionerships in Nyasaland and Uganda; Sir Richmond Palmer, one of Lugard's resident officers in Nigeria, published his **Sudanese Memoirs** and his **History of the First Twelve Years of the Reign of Mai Idris Alooma** in 1928 and 1929; Maurice Delafosse published his **Les Noirs d'Afrique** in 1921 on his retirement from service in various parts of French Equatorial Africa. More significant for the future, it was the imperialism of the new historiography in its broadest aspect that opened out the study of the African diaspora: Johnston's pioneering survey of **The Negro in New World**, dealing with the Caribbean and South America as well as the United States, appeared in 1910.

Even so, although African studies did become institutionalised during this period, they did so at the price of involvement in colonial "administrative practice" (as it came to be called) and training. This involvement actually delayed the professionalising of African history in its own right, in favour of two ahistorical,externally descriptive disciplines - social anthropology and phonetically-based linguistics - that were designed (in the words of Arthur Radcliffe-Brown, one of the most

rticulate apologists) to "reduce ... to order by some sort of assification ... the immense diversity of forms of human ciety " with which the administrator had to deal.(7) By the d of our third phase the dominance of African studies by nchronic anthropology and linguistics had proved unacceptable, spite the serious intentions of the original promoters. Indeed encounter here, I think, a major and fateful case of what chel Foucault, in the Archeologie du savoir, called an istemo: an ordering of experience that is kept deliberately osed in the interests of political and cultural hegemony.

continue illustrating from the career of Sir Harry Johnston: 1908 he published his paper "The Empire and Anthropology" in ich he pleaded with a British government both philistine and rsimonious for the regular funding of the Royal Anthropological stitute on the grounds that not only was it already being used formally for the training of colonial administrators but that nthropology is the best corrective of intolerance, cruelty, ntimentality, and racial arrogance". His final contribution to rican studies and administration, the monumental handbook to widest-spread and administratively most useful lingua franca Africa, A Comparative Study of the Bantu and Semi-Bantu nguages, was published in 1919-22. As regards the actual stitutionalising of African studies, the first formal imperial aining centre - the School of Oriental Studies - was set up thin the University of London in 1917 (though thoug of, hnston was already too ill to be seriously considered for the rectorship) and was enlarged in 1938 to include a formal

D partment of Africa, under the distinguished phonetician, Ida W d. So far as the increasing dominance of "colonialist" a thropology under the formidable influence of Seligman, M linowski and Radcliffe-Brown was concerned, the International I stitute of African Languages and Cultures w s founded, under L gard's chairmanship, in 1926 and its most characteristic c tribution to "administrative practice", African Political S tems, dedicated to Seligman and largely coordinated by F cliffe-Brown, was published in 1940.

N ertheless, such viewing of Africa and Africans as an object of a storical intellectual manipulation was more and more incapable c accomodating what Johnston, at the end of his life, saw as t growing "intellectuality...of the coloured peoples" t mselves, "an insulting policy towards them [which he went on t predict,] will join them some day in a vast league against E ope and America".(8) Indeed, the increasingly dysfunctional a ultimately unacceptable effect of this on African studies is s wn by the fact that African intellectuality expressed itself a er 1885 not only in oppositional journalism and pamphleteering b also in a sequence of formal historical essays - from R ndorf's A history of the Gold Coast of 1895, for example, t ough the writing of Casely-Heyford and J B Danquah, to J O L as' The religion of the Yoruba in relation to the religion of A ient Egypt of 1948 - where there is a growing sense, in F e's words in the Unesco History, "that a myth of the African p t is being deliberately cultivated to combat the myth of E opean superiority".

I turn now to the ambivalent effect of imperialism on the development of the bibliographical infrastructure for African Studies, and in particular on the British Museum Library. On the one hand, the growing efficiency of colonial administration enlarged the scope of Colonial Office deposits of official publications under Regulation 261, which became interlinked with colonial legal deposit of strictly commercial publications. (Here the increasing business activity of the highly subsidized Government Printers complicated the situation in a way that research has not yet been able to untangle). From the growing African opposition in print the British Museum Library acquired the only run in the United Kingdom of Danquah's Times of West Africa. In addition to Johnston's and Lugard's works published in London, we acquired copies of Richmond Palmer's works published by the Government Printer in Lagos. Moreover, the growth of transatlantic publishing following the Brussels Convention of 1885 meant that the Library acquired by legal deposit the increasing number of serious works on Africa published with United States firms by the Afro-American diaspora, from W E B DuBois' Suppression of the African Slave Trade in the United States, the first of the Harvard Historical Studies, published in 1896, through The Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey (1923), to Richard Wright's Black Power (1954) and, of course, Haley's Roots.

On the other hand the increasingly unsympathetic philistinism of the late Victorian and Edwardian Imperial Age - of which Johnston complained - severely damaged the high-Victorian

imperial book system so fas as the British Museum was concerned. In particular I note the cutting down of the Library's annual purchase grant after 1886. It is true that many other works of the Afro-American diaspora - for example, Weatherford's **The Negro from Africa to America** (1924), DuBois' **Black Folk, Then and Now** (1939) - which were not received by "transatlantic" legal deposit, were nevertheless purchased by the Museum on publication in the United States, as were the important series of works by the white American anthropologists Franz Boas and his pupil Melville Herskovits .pa (particularly the latter's **Dahomey**, 1939 and the **Myth of the Negro**, 1941) who, deriving via Adolf Bastian from the original, more open world-humanism of the Humboldts, represented the major alternative tradition to the ahistorical structuralism of Radcliffe-Brown, and who were in close empathy with the diaspora thinking of DuBois **et al**.(9) (Boas and in particular Herskovits exercised, as we shall note, a seminal influence on the fourth and present stage in the development of African studies). However the decline in the Museum's purchase grant after 1885 can be shown to have affected not only the acquisition of many European scholarly works on Africa (for example, we bought three volumes of the 1925 definitive edition of de Slane's translation of Ibn Khaldun, but not the fourth, key bibliographical volume). It also affected the critically important area of African ephemera (which of the net of colonial deposit largely failed to capture). Here again, the lack of adequate retrospective bibliographical control makes quantification difficult, but already O G Tamuno's researches

into printing and publishing in Nigeria have shown that we have none of the items he lists as issued by the Tika-Tore Printing Works in Lagos (although we do have a copy of Herbert Macaulay's speech on the Lagos land question issued by Tika-Tore in 1912 which Tamuno does not list). Tika-Tore is of importance not only for its production of "political and historical tracts without which [as Tamuno says] it would have been difficult to reconstruct properly the national history", but also for the fact that it was seminal for the Nigerian market literature which at Onitsha in the late 1940s became of major importance for later main-stream Nigerian creative writing.(10)

Moreover the rise of "administrative practice" as a major bias in African Studies meant the passing of the initiative in African collection development away from the world-humanism of the national encyclopedic libraries to specialised research and teaching institutions with direct involvement in colonial management: The Royal Empire Society (now the Royal Commonwealth Society), the Royal Anthropological Institute, and above all (in the longer term) the School of Oriental and African studies. No longer, as in the nineteenth-century, could the British Museum Library turn to its advantage the pressure from a constituency of semi-amateur enthusiasts like Cust and Johnston.

IV

The fourth phase in the development of African studies and its bibliographical infrastructure began with the decline of the imperial episteme in the years immediately following the Second

World War. Africanists in the West encountered the double paradox that true domestication of the African experience required setting aside their own "domestic" point of view and instead of the Unesco History, adopting "Africa, and not Europe [as] the point of departure", yet at the same time placing Africa, in part because of its diaspora, "in the framework of world history". The effect of this double paradox on African studies and bibliography has been, and still is, traumatic, even revolutionary.

In the first place, the intellectual ordering of the African experience on its own, as distinct from European, terms means ordering an experience which has been, and to an extent remains, essentially non-literate, oral. This in turn means breaking and re-setting the canons of interpretation which ever since their invention by Aristotle have presupposed literacy - writing - criticism to be the mode of recognising experience. It is not surprising, I find, that in the West this shock of lack of recognition occurred at the "inward" level of literature rather than at the level of trade and administration hitherto dominant in African studies. There was the first authoritative anthology of African verse to be edited by an African, Leopold Sedar Senghor's Nouvelle poesie negre et malegache, which was published in 1948 with the disturbing, and now classic, introduction by Jean-Paul Sartre, Orphee noir. This was followed in 1952 by Amos Tutuola's Palm-Wine Drinkard and the almost desperate attempt of English men of letters, for example Dylan Thomas, to live with its exotic Yoruba speech rhythms and themes -

the "interference"phenomenon which the Prague linguistic school identifies as characteristic of ex-colonial, neo-autochthonous literature.(11) There is in African studies a need to reconfigure and combine scholarly disciplines usually kept more or less separate. For example there is the need to interpret African oral tradition in part through the non-verbal modes of music, dance, plastic decoration, and so on with which in Africa that tradition is, and as recovered by archaeology always has been,, intimately connected. There is the need to interpret political and economic enterprise in part through modes of production which, again as recovered by archaeology, have not changed much since the Iron Age and, unlike European modes of production are rather cases of **la longue duree** than of **conjuncture** (12). Above all there is the need to make one's interpretation speak at one and the same time not only to the African condition but also to the human condition in the world at large.

These needs have produced a grand methodological debate that is, to put it mildly, both obsessive and professionally unsettling (though of considerable importance for the humanities and social sciences in general). Thus we have Senghor's own repeated attempts, now collected in his **Libertes**, to define **negritude** and **la civilisation de l'Universel** as the two parameters for African studies. We have Vansina's brilliant **De la tradition orale: essai de methode historique** of 1961. We have Ruth Finnegan's **Oral literature in Africa** of 1970 later generalised to account not only for oral literature in Australasia, the Pacific,

Amerindia, Asia and Europe, but also for popular literature whereever, in her Oral Poetry: its nature, significance and social context (1977) and The Penguin Book of Oral Poetry (1978). Hence arises the inevitability of the first half of volume 1 of the Unesco General History being devoted to "Methodology". And the end is not yet in sight. Despite the efforts of M. Ki-Zerbo and his colleagues, and their thinking in terms of Grands Siecles and the like, Africa still awaits both its Michelet and its Lavisse.(13)

In the second place, during the two decades after the Second World War the research and bibliographical networks promoting African Studies were likewise radically transformed into their present configuration. What (remembering Harry Johnston) we might call African intellectuality was at last effectively professionalised and institutionalised in the new universities - Lagos, Makerere, Ibadan, Sierra Leone - and in the publishing bureaux - the East African Literature Bureau, the Western Region Literature Committee - set up by the receding colonial administration: often, as in the case of the University of Sierra Leone, on the basis of the missionary college, Fourah Bay, which had first encouraged this intellectuality. Responding to this, and indeed helping to train many of the first generation of professional scholars from Africa, the research institutions dedicated to African Studies in the West broke out from their anthropological and linguistic enclosure to embrace the multidisiplinary, ecumenical strategy of Boas, Herskovits and African "area studies". So far as Britain was concerned this

break-out was officially sanctioned, and to a large extent immediately realised, by the Hayter Report on Oriental Slavonic, East European and African Studies in 1961. The most substantial result, one might say, was the setting up in the 1960s of an African Area Centre at the School of Oriental and African Studies, including a lectureship in African musical studies - and an accelerated expansion of the library (under J D Pearson and B C Bloomfield) (14) - and a Centre of West African Studies under Professor Fage at Birmingham. The most emblematic result was the passing of the chairmanship of Lugard's International African Institute to an African (Jacob Ade Ajayi) in 1975, another African (K Onwuka Dike) having been vice-chairman since 1963.

This sudden expansion and diversification of African studies in the fifties and sixties required (as Hayter saw clearly enough) a comparable rapid expansion and diversification of the bibliographical infrastructure, largely in the form of international as well as national networks. In these networks even the hitherto autarchic British Museum Library became increasingly, albeit indirectly, involved as it began to revive its African research collections, following the decline of its purchase grant after 1886 and the eventual collapse of colonial deposit with the granting of African independence. Thus in the year after Hayter the British Museum Library played a part in setting up the British cooperative acquisition network, the Standing Conference on Library Materials on Africa (SCOLMA); and it chose as its own first, main objective within the network the development of a national collection of African official

publications, exchange replacing colonial deposit as the chief mode of acquisition. (With the assimilation of the British Museum Library into the British Library in 1973 the possiblity arises of lending African official publications, either in photocopy or in the future even in original form, through the Library's Lending Division).

African newspapers, which had boomed after the Second World War, were still donated to the Museum's National newspaper library at Colindale, mainly through the Royal Empire (now Commonwealth) Society, until such sources dried up with the completion of the independence movement in the mix-sixties. The acquisition of African newspapers at Colindale has declined, not so much as a result of a still not full-restored purchase grant, as of the newly perceived need to acquire such material in conservation-microform and the still unresolved difficulties of acquiring microform from Africa. (This could be one of the occasions for reapproachment between the British network and the appropriate American network - the Cooperative African Microcopying Project, CAMP).

In the years immediately following Hayter and the creation of SCOLMA the acquisition of non-official commercial publications from Africa was given by the Library second place to official publications, again not because of shortage of money but because of the need to await the development of effective African publishing within Africa as well as the appointment of qualified staff within the Library, and (we must add) the need now to await the development

of effective African book export. Moreover the the African book trade has been dominated by transnational publishing and this, coupled with the desire of the first generation of leading post-Independence authors such as Achebe or Ngugi to reach an international as well as African audience through the London, as distinct from the local, offices of the transnationals (for example, through Heinemann's African Writers' Series, edited by Achebe, and issued by Heineman London), has meant that the British Museum Library is perhaps acquiring even more African writing now by legal deposit than it did in the earlier three stages we have been considering. Nevertheless, reviving its commitment to printed ephemera, the Library has contributed to the Anglo-American networks the purchase of what appears to be the largest file of Onitsha market pamphlets in a public collection, together with a machine-readable union catalogue of this literature, now under way. of this literature.

Finally, in the light of the importance of oral research material in this fourth stage of the development of African studies, one must note as an integral part of the British Library's African collections the ethnomusical section of the British National Sound Archive, which joined the Library in 1982 and which Miss Duran discussed in the AV Media section yesterday morning as part of this survey of libraries and the study of the African cultural heritage. Indeed, if one adds the African ethnographic and folk-art collections in the (British) Museum of Mankind, and the African natural history collections, originated largely by

Banks, in the British Museum of Natural History, then the British Library/British Museum complex in London constitutes one of the major resource-centres for African Studies in the world (this we will be surveying in greater detail in the Library's January Colloquium).

V

In concluding this brief survey of the development of the British Library's research collections I would like to summarize their present status within the general framework of African studies and bibliography, and to suggest some prospects for the immediate future.

The bibliographical network for African studies - as for regional studies anywhere in the world, including Europe - can be thought of in terms of four levels. The foundation level, since African Independence, has been provided by the various national collections both within Africa itself and throughout the diaspora (that is, principally the Americas). Given the predominance of orality - in the African present perhaps almost as much as in the African past - such national collections have to contain the national sound archive as well as the manuscript and printed archives (the latter based on effective legal deposit). In the diaspora I am thinking for example of the collections of Afro-American folk music, including jazz, made for the Library of Congress by Alan Lomax and his successors. The same predominance of orality, and the consequent difficulty of the attempt to decolonize printing, publishing and (of vital importance for the

network) book distribution, requires the national collections to be associated with the national book development councils which have been set up since the war and are now being related to each other through the Unesco programme for a World Reading Society. (The example with which I am best acquainted comes from another Unesco development area, South-East Asia: the association between the National Library of Singapore and the Singapore Book Development Council, under the chairmanship of the National Librarian, Mrs Hedwig Anuar).

The second level of the resource network, equally recent, is that formed by the various specialist African collections acting in concert, if need be using telecommunications and supported by the appropriate political organisation. This level consists, firstly, of the various national collections in Africa, in theory at least linked through the African Bibliographical Centre (a possible analogy here is the new Pacific Information Centre of the South Pacific Commission, serviced by satellite and located in the University of the South Pacific, Fiji); secondly, of the dedicated research collections outside Africa in Europe, North America, etc. that are linked through their professional consortia (SCOLMA; the Archives-Libraries Committee of the African Studies Association in America).

The third level is constituted by the old-established and, from the point of view of printed materials at least, universal collections of the Bibliotheque Nationale, the British Library and the Library of Congress, where the African sections form part of an encyclopedic whole indispensable for placing the

African experience within the context of a world history that is in fact largely made up of intercontinental diasporas - Chinese and Indian, Jewish and Muslim, and more recently European as well as African.

The fourth level of the infrastructure arises when one or more of the same research collections, through the conspicuousness of their depth and through the resultant expertise of their personnel in historical bibliography, themselves participate actively in the advancement of scholarship. This can be so even in the relatively young discipline of systematic African studies where (for example) the history of African literature still requires integration into the general history of Africa, among other things by adducing the history of the book in nineteenth and twentieth-century Africa to demonstrate where missionary or transnational publishing has exercised editorial control over African texts. Of course, particular library collections may and do appear on one or all of these various levels; and in the case of history of the African book the libraries involved are highly miscellaneous: national archives, old established public and subscription libraries, university rare book collections, and last but by no means least (remembering Winter Jones' concern for the history of printing), the third-level encyclopedic collections such as the British Library' African Collections.

Within this four-level network, so far as current material is concerned the British Library's policy is to continue the classic, mid-nineteenth century encyclopedic strategy of

collecting everything coming within the scope of the national printed archive, including (therefore) works by Africans, especially those of the British diaspora, published or re-published in the United Kingdom. For the rest of the world's printed output, we acquire material written by Africans or relating to Africa that is "of research potential" (blessed phrase'). This we interpret to mean all material, including newspapers, cited in those scholarly works which have reached what we might call "canonical status" in the field, or (to avoid having to wait until such "canonical" works appear, to the frustration of scholarship) material which we in the Library judge will be eventually so cited. Thus we would acquire the works listed in the bibliographies of the Unesco General History or the Cambridge History (as we would also, for example, works listed in the bibliographies of the comparable histories in other fields, for example the Oxford histories of Singapore or New Zealand).

So far as retrospective material is concerned - of greater concern, I presume, to this present audience - we are in the process of filling the many gaps in the collections that will be identified as the perspective and the rationale I have been outlining this morning are explored more fully within the Library. Though an apparently in-house operation, this gap-filling nevertheless depends on the national and international network in at least two important ways.

First, the difficulty of acquiring African desiderata from the antiquarian book trade in any orderly way will be considerable:

nineteenth-century missionary printing, for example, is according to P E H Hair, is "scorned even by African book-sellers"(15). This constraint, together with the growing concern among general library administrators at the overhead cost of preserving antiquarian (in particular ephemeral antiquarian) material, is obliging rare-book librarians to look to large-scale retrospective photo-copying programmes for filling their gaps, at least in the first instance. These programmes depend on collaboration between the various institutional collections among which the originals tend to be widely distributed. Moreover such collections, not only in Africa but also in the West, include those in national and local archives as well as libraries. Indeed, . . . . . the International Council of Archives [illegible] is proposing a co-ordinated strategy for preserving both the manuscript and printed cultural heritage of Africa. May I suggest the IFLA Rare Book Section enter into appropriate discussions with the ICA forthwith?

Secondly however, such photocopying projects, like the identification of the gaps in one's early book collections that I mentioned earlier, also depend on adequate retrospective bibliographical control. Such control is in its way still as imperfect in the West as it is in Africa, and if the British happen to be more advanced than most countries through their so-called "Short Title Catalogue" programme (which is now entering the nineteenth-century), permit me to say that much of their progress since the first English STC was launched by the Bibliographical Society in 1917 has depended, both for its

trategy and its motivation, on exploiting the convergence of terest of both scholars and research librarians in the history f the book - historical bibliography - that was and is the ntral rationale not only of the Bibliographical Society in gland, but of the IFLA Rare Books Section and Library History und Table.

e of the most important contributions, then that the Rare Book ction can make to African studies would be to add its support the proposals for the cooperation which will be necessary to mplete retrospective bibliographical control both in Africa and road, wherever a bibliographical infrastructure for African udies has existed or is now emerging.

I R WILLISON

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES


Gerard, Albert. African Language Literatures : an introduction to the literary history of Sub-Saharan Africa. Harlow, Essex 1981

Lefebvre, Georges. La Revolution Francaise . Paris 1963 pp 16-21

Meinecke, Friedrich. Weltburgertum und Nationalstaat Munich and Berlin 1908

Pfeiffer, Rudolf. Philologia perennis. Festrede. Munich 1961

Boeckh, August. Encyklopedie und Methodolgie der philologischen Wissenschaften. Leipzig 1886

Fabian, Bernhard. Gottingen als Forschungsbibliothek im 18 Jahrhundert. In

Wolfenbutteler Forschungen, Bd 2 1977 pp 204-239

Schnabel, Franz: Deutsche Geschichte im neunzehnten Jahrhundert. Freiburg im Breisgau, 1929 - 1934 Bd.1, Die Grundlagen; Bd 3, Erfahrungswissenschaften und Technik

Willison, I R. The Development of the British Museum Library to 1857 in its European Context: a tour d'horizon. In Wolfenbutteler Forschungen Bd.2 1977 pp 33-61

Jones, John Winter. Public Libraries. North British Review XV 1851 p.173

Lord Elgin, Letter to Pannizzi, 21 May 1862. India Office Records MSS EUR F.83/17 p.8

British Library. DPB DH2/8 Oct 22 1866

African Political Systems, ed. M Fortes and E E Evans-Pritchard London 1940 pp vii, xi.

Johnston, Sir Harry H. The Backward Peoples and our Relations with them, London 1920 p.61

International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences. New York 1968. Articles on Bastian, Boas and Herskovits.

Tamuno, O.G. Printing and Publishing in Nigeria: a historical survey. Nigerian Libraries 9 April/August 1973 pp 1-12

Klima, Vladimir, Karel Frantisek Ruzicka and Peter Zima. Black Africa, Literature and Language Prague, 1976, pp 55-7

Clarence-Smith, W G. For Braudel: a note on the 'Ecole des 'Annales' and the historiography of

Africa. History in Africa 4 1977 pp 273-81

(13) Ki-Zerbo, Joseph. Histoire de l'Afrique noire. Paris 1972. Section 5 "Grands siecles"

(14) Phillips, C.H. The School of Oriental & African Studies. London 1967 pp 39-65

(15) Hair, P E H. The Contribution of Freetown and Fourah Bay College to the Study of West African Languages. Sierra Leone Language Review No. 1 1962 pp 17-18

IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE, NAIROBI 1984

Division: Collections and Services

Section: Acquisitions et échanges

125- ACQUI / OD -4F

# Les Relations d'échanges entre les bibliothèques d'Afrique francophone et la Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris (S.E.I.)

par

Madame Anne Zundel BEN KHEMIS,
conservateur
Service des Echanges internationaux
Bibliothèque nationale
PARIS ,France.

...rnal use only:
brought to meeting no:
... 119 ...
s:
presented orally [x]
...stribution only [ ]

*Anne Zundel BEN KHEMIS*

***Les Relations d'échanges entre les bibliothèques d'Afrique francophone et la Bibliothèque nationale de Paris (S.E.I., Service des échanges internationaux)***

*A l'occasion du Congrès de l'IFLA en Afrique, le Service des Echanges internationaux a lancé une enquête auprès de 61 bibliothèques sises dans 24 pays francophones et hispanophone d'Afrique et de l'Océan Indien pour mieux connaître leurs critiques sur les relations d'échanges, avec le S.E.I. (B.N.Paris)et leurs désirs. Il y a eu 8 bibliothèques nationales, 18 bibliothèques universitaires ou assimilées qui ont répondu. Nous n'avons aucune information en provenance du Mali, du Cameroun, du Tchad, du Zaïre. Dans l'ensemble,les échanges actuels sont considérés comme un mode d'acquisition tout à fait secondaire, peu fiable et surtout subi. Toutes les bibliothèques responsables de la conservation du patrimoine national demandent que leur soient attribués, en "ordre permanent d'échange", les documents publiés en France et se rapportant à leur pays, en original ou en (micro)copie et souhaitentpasser convention avec la Bibliothèque nationale de Paris définissant la valeur de nos échanges à terme et les modalités de copie des collections anciennes conservées en France les intéressant.*

Les relations d'échanges entre les bibliothèques du monde entier et la France se font, soit directement de bibliothèque à bibliothèque, comme cela se pratique dans beaucoup de pays européens, aux Etats-Unis ou en Union soviétique, soit par l'intermédiaire du Service des Echanges internationaux. C'est un service ancien rattaché en 1936 à la Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris, dont il assure les Echanges, mais il est chargé d'aider les bibliothèques françaises dans leurs échanges, car il peut fournir les documents nécessaires pour établir ou maintenir ceux-ci. Héritier de services divers, puisqu'il assume en outre la fonction de retransmission des publications savantes de France vers l'étranger et de l'étranger vers la France et celle de diffuser certaines publications françaises ayant reçu des subventions d'état, il est depuis 1977 "Centre de coopération", confié en régie à la Bibliothèque nationale. Il dispose chaque année d'environ 14 000 séries de périodiques et de 90 000 volumes de monographies, produits courants de l'édition française, auxquels s'ajoutent les documents isolés ou parfois des collections entières français et étrangers, proposés par des bibliothèques qui souhaitent se libérer de doubles ou de volumes dont elles n'ont plus l'usage, comme cela se faisait à la British Lending library jusqu'au 1er janvier 1982 ou se pratique encore au Danemark, chez IDE.

Si quelques bibliothèques africanistes, donc spécialisées, françaises entretiennent, grâce aux chercheurs qui les ont constituées, des relations d'échanges directes avec certaines bibliothèques africaines, il semble qu'une part importante du flux des échanges de documents entre l'Afrique francophone et la France se fasse à travers le S.E.I. (Service des Echanges internationaux), essentiellement

au profit de la Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris et de quelques bibliothèques universitaires ou de recherche possédant des fonds importants sur l'Afrique, comme la Bibliothèque de l'Ecole Nationale des Langues orientales vivantes ou celle du Musée de l'Homme.

Avec les bibliothèques fondées avant l'indépendance dans les pays rattachés à l'Afrique occidentale française et à l'Afrique équatoriale française, comme à Madagascar, la Bibliothèque nationale, chargée du dépôt légal en France , a des relations qui sont anciennes: en effet la France y avait exporté ses propres lois de dépôt légal des publications, qui y sont restées en vigueur parfois tardivement, du moins longtemps après l'indépendance. En général elles ont été remplacées par de nouvelles lois de dépôt légal. Il ne semble pas qu'un seul des pays touchés par cette pratique l'ait abandonnée. Le dépôt des publications se faisait auprès d'une administration française, la bibliothèque générale quand elle existait qui en gardait un exemplaire et en envoyait un deuxième à la Bibliothèque nationale de Paris . Par accumulation se sont "sédimentés" des fonds africains "anciens", qui ont subi peu de déprédations, sinon d'origine naturelle (autolyse ou brûlure des papiers mal stabilisés, ruptures des coutures et/ou des reliures,etc.), car dispersés selon leur sujet, dans les collections de la Bibliothèque Nationale, ces documents ne pouvaient être repérés et donc consultés que par l'intermédiaire de catalogues, qui furent longs à paraître, dans la plupart des cas.
Après l'indépendance, ces relations furent souvent maintenues, avec plus ou moins de rigueur, essentiellement pour les publications en série. Il nous a semblé utile de les entériner par des conventions d'échanges avec les bibliothèques concernées, ce qui est maintenant chose faite avec le Maroc et le sera, sans doute, prochainement avec l'Algérie, la Côte d'Ivoire et la Tunisie. Dans ce contexte, faire une enquête sur l'état des relations du SEI avec les bibliothèques des états francophones d'Afrique et la place des échanges dans leur politique d'acquisition, paraissait d'autant plus intéressant, que, 25 ans après

leur indépendance, nombre d'états ayaient créé de nouvelles bibliothèques et permis le développement de structures éditoriales parfois puissantes.

Cette enquête a été envoyée au cours de l'hiver 1983/84 à 61 bibliothèques existant dans 24 pays francophones, dont quelques uns n'avaient jamais relevé de la France (Zaïre, Ruanda, Burundi, Guinée équatoriale) ou ne faisaient pas partie des territoires liés à la France au moment de leur indépendance (Ile Maurice, Les Seychelles). Pour être sûrs que les questionnaires parviendraient réellement à des bibliothècaires et pas à des personnels administratifs de ministère, nous avons préféré les envoyer sous couvert des conseillers culturels français dans chaque pays. Un seul pays y a vu une ingérence politique, mais il semble que cela tienne plus de l'attitude personnelle d'un fonctionnaire du ministère de l'enseignement supérieur. Un seul pays n'a pas fourni de réponse par manque de Bibliothèque Nationale et/ou universitaire active (le Niger). Il nous manque les questionnaires de trois pays avec lesquels nous entretenons des relations suivies (Cameroun, Zaïre, Mali). Nous supposons que les trois institutions contactées à l'Ile Maurice ne nous ont rien envoyé, car depuis plusieurs années la Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris est, selon la loi locale, dépositaire, avec la British Library, du dépôt légal mauricien. Comme nous continuons à envoyer des documents aux bibliothèques mauriciennes, nous pensions qu'il y aurait lieu de mieux connaître ces correspondants. Enfin au Maghreb, toutes les bibliothèques nationales ont répondu sauf la Bibliothèque générale et Archives du Maroc, avec laquelle nous venons de passer une convention d'échange. Aux Comores, il semble que le Centre de documentation et de Recherche scientifique soit la seule bibliothèque active comme celle de l'Ecole normale supétieure de Nouakchott, en Maurétanie, qui, seules, ont répondu. Ainsi le S.E.I. dispose-t-il d'informations provenant de 8 bibliothèques nationales, 16 bibliothèques universitaires et de 2 bibliothèques liées à l'enseignement supérieur (Maurétanie) et à la Recherche (Comores).

Toutes ces bibliothèques se considèrent comme des bibliothèques chargées de conservation, mais aussi de communication, à l'exception de 6 d'entre elles, qui relèvent du système universitaire. Elles sont ouvertes tant aux chercheurs et enseignants, qu'aux étudiants mais seulement 16 se donnent le rôle de centre de recherche bibliographique (Burundi BU, Comores CNDRS, Cote d'Ivoire BN, Gabon BN, Madagascar BN et BU, Sénégal BU dakar, bibliothèques du Maroc, de l'Algérie et de la Tunisie) sur leurs fonds propres, éventuellement les fonds d'intérêt national. Cinq bibliothèques disposent d'un catalogue collectif (Burundi BU, Gabon BN, Ruanda BU, Madagascar BU, Tunis BU médecine), une en a un en projet (Sénégal BU Dakar). Pratiquement toutes ces bibliothèques possèdent des collections spécialisées qui portent d'abord sur l'histoire locale, la(les) culture(s) de la région (Africana, documents sur l'A.O.F., l'A.E.F., le Maghreb, ou plus précisément sur le pays, Ivoiriensia, togoliensia, tunisiana,etc., islamica) ou bien correspondent à un type de document (cartes à la BU de Lomé au Togo, journaux locaux à la B.N. du Congo, publications officielles internationales d'organismes auxquels participe le pays).

Nous désirions profiter de l'enquête pour mieux connaître l'état récent de l'édition de chaque pays, que les bibliothèques locales ont le moyen de pouvoir bien repérer. Seuls trois pays ont une structure éditoriale centralisée (Bénin, Togo, Maurétanie) chargée de l'édition et de la distribution. En Algérie,la S.N.E.D. possède le monopole de la diffusion. Cinq états n'ont pas d'éditeurs privés (République Centrafricaine, Comores, Ruanda, Seychelles, Guinée équatoriale), ni dépositaires de maison d'édition étrangères, qui n'existent pas non plus au Burundi, au Sénégal, en Algérie, en Maurétanie et en Tunisie .

Il semble que chaque état, à l'exception de la République Centrafricaine et de la Guinée équatoriale, ait organisé un système d'édition pour ses publications officielles. Le Gabon connaît 5 services éditeurs, le Ruanda quatre, le Congo trois, et la Côte d'Ivoire, comme Madagascar deux. Le Maroc et la Tunisie signalent l'existence

d'une Imprimerie officielle et d'un grand nombre de centres de publication, rattachés aux administrations et entreprises publiques. Plusieurs bibliothèques peuvent utiliser la production du service éditeur qui leur est lié directement ou indirectement : c'est le cas du CNDRS des Comores, de la B.N. de Côte d'Ivoire (P.O. ou publications officielles), de la BU de Tananarive(publications universitaires), BN de Tananarive (réimpression d'éditions anciennes et quelques P.O. en langue non-malgache), de la BN de Victoria aux Seychelles (P.O.), de la B.U. de Lomé au Togo (P.O. et publications universitaires), de l'E.N.S. de Nouakchott (P.O. et publications universitaires). Pratiquement toutes les bibliothèques du Maghreb disposent de leurs propres publications pour les échanges et peuvent obtenir des publications officielles. En Europe une part importante des échanges se fait sur la base de publications savantes produites par des groupes, associations ou institutions académiques ou savantes et par des laboratoires de recherche. C'est pourquoi nous demandions à chaque bibliothèque de nous signaler les institutions de ce type qu'elle connaissait, en nous en fournissant noms et adresses :

| | Sociétés savantes | Laboratoire de recherche |
|---|---|---|
| Burundi | - | 1 |
| Comores | - | 1 |
| Congo | 4 | 2 |
| Cote d'Ivoire | 1 | 3 |
| Gabon | - | 3 |
| Madagascar | 4 | (grand nombre) |
| Ruanda | - | 3 |
| Sénégal | 3 | 5 |
| Togo | 1 | 1 |
| Algérie | 9 | - |
| Maroc | 4 | (grand nombre) |
| Tunisie | 3 | - |
| Maurétanie | 3 | 4 |

Ces chiffres recouvrent nécessairement une réalité partielle, car il est parfois difficile de dénombrer exactement les laboratoires de recherche qui sont intégrés dans une administration dont ils sont une activité, plus ou moins individualisée par ses publications.

Les statistiques bibliographiques , dont on sait combien elles susceptibles d'erreur, quand les éditeurs ne voient aucun intérêt à déposer ou à faire connaître leurs publications, nous ont été fournies par quelques bibliothèques nationales (Cote d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Algérie et Tunisie de façon très détaillée; le Bénin , les Comores, le Congo, le Gabon, les Seychelles ). Celle-ci est constituée pour l'essentiel d'ouvrages et de périodiques: six pays éditent des microformes (Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Madagascar, Sénégal, Maroc, Tunisie), six des cassettes (Bénin, Comores, Côte d'Ivoire, Ruanda, Algérie, Tunisie), sans qu'il soit possible de déterminer exactement ce qu'il en est pour le Gabon, le Sénégal, les Seychelles, le Togo et le Maroc. Il y a édition de disques au Bénin, en Centrafricaine, aux Comores, au Congo, en Côte d'Ivoire, à Madagascar, au Togo, en Algérie, c'est à dire dans plus de pays que pour les cassettes, dont la production est pourtant beaucoup plus facile. Ceci expliquant peut-être cela: les bibliothèques chargées de recueillir la production locale contrôlent d'autant plus mal celle-ci qu'elle est plus diffuse dans des ateliers petits,mobiles, instables. Il semble n'y avoir d'édition de bandes vidéo qu'au Bénin et en Côte d'Ivoire.

Le dépôt légal des publications a été institué dans tous les pays, qui ont répondu à l'enquête, sauf en République Centrafricaine, et au Ruanda et aux Seychelles, qui n'ont jamais connu les règles administratives françaises : il concerne aussi bien les publications commerciales ou non que les publications officielles. Quatorze pays possèdent une bibliographie nationale, plus ou moins courante, le Togo en prépare une, mais la bibliographie nationale ne signale les P.O. qu'au Bénin, en Centrafricaine, au Congo, en Cote d'Ivoire, au Ruanda , en Algérie et en Tunisie. Au Maroc, le Centre national de documentation publie une bibliographie des publications officielles du royaume, et bientôt des collectivités locales.

Malgré l'existence de bibliographies nationales, paraissant avec plus ou moins de régularité, la plupart des bibliothèques avouent ne pas recevoir assez d'informations sur les produits de l'édition locale , mises à part la BN du Congo, la BU de Dakar, la BN des Seychelles, les BU de lettres et de médecine de Tunis et de Sfax. Les échanges d'informations bibliographiques sont peu développés sauf dans les bibliothèques d'enseignement supérieur du Maghreb, du Burundi et du Ruanda, à la BN de Cote d'Ivoire et ( celle de Tananarive, qui communiquent avec d'autres institutions de la région ou de leur pays.

Si le dépôt légal (plus ou moins volontaire) existe pratiquement dans tous les pays observés, il ne sert aux acquisitions que pour les bibliothèques nationales ou assimilées à l'ENS de Nouakchott mais aussi à la BU du Bénin au Togo. La majeure partie des acquisitions est faite d'achats auprès de libraires, de dépositaires quand ils existent ou d'éditeurs, avec la possibilité d'utiliser des groupements d'achats dans certains pays (Burundi, Ruanda, Seychelles, Maroc, Maurétanie, Tunisie).

Il arrive qu'il soit utile de remplacer les acquisitions définitives par un emprunt (temporaire), dans le cadre du prêt interbibliothèque, ce qui permet de fournir la documentation demandée par les utilisateurs sans frais importants. Or le prêt inter-bibliothèque, qui existe communément dans les bibliothèques maghrébines, n'a que 6 adeptes en Afrique noire (BU Burundi,BN Côte d'Ivoire, BU de Dakar au Sénégal, BN et BU de Tananarive, BU du Bénin au Togo). Il se pratique d'abord au profit des usagers directs de la bibliothèque mais quelques unes acceptent d'en faire profiter des lecteurs dispersés (BU du Bénin, ENS de Maurétanie, BU de Tananarive, BU droit de Rabat, BN de Tunis, BU de médecine de Tunis et de Sfax). Partout cette opération est présentée comme de peu d'importance( quelques unités reçues ou envoyées par an),

bien que la BU de Lomé ait emprunté 280 documents pour 40 lecteurs, l'ENS de Maurétanie 400 pour 400 lecteurs, que la BN de Tunis ait eu 27 utilisateurs, la BU de Rabat en droit fait venir 120 ouvrages, la BU de médecine de Sfax 120 thèses et 460 articles. Toutes les bibliothèques reconnaissent que le prêt international devrait leur permettre de compléter temporairement leurs fonds touchant à l'information scientifique et technique et parfois ceux qui relèvent du patrimoine culturel (BU Burundi, BU Centrafricaine, BN du Congo et de Côte d'Ivoire, d'Algérie, de Tunisie, BU du Ruanda, du Sénégal, du Togo). La BN de Tananarive reconnait ne jamais demander de documents mais en envoyer régulièrement en divers pays. Très peu de bibliothèques se servent du prêt inter-bibliothèque pour compléter leur information bibliographique.

Les échanges

Dans l'état actuel des choses, les échanges fonctionnent selon une convention internationale(convention de Paris, signée à l'UNESCO, 1958), où les objectifs sont fort clairement définis. Il faut se rendre à l'évidence que peu de services d'échanges les appliquent effectivement pour diverses raisons, qui tiennent de la lourdeur des opérations, de la difficulté de tenir des balances à jour, de disposer du matériel d'échanges et souvent d'avoir du personnel compétent quand ne manquent pas en sus les crédits pour obtenir les emballages ou payer les timbres poste . D'autre part si les bibliothèques nationales ont des obligations précises, encore faut-il qu'elles existent, les autres bibliothèques sont laissées libres d'agir comme il leur convient. Or pour établir un flux d'échanges interessants, il faut que chaque partie y trouve son compte et qu'elles se connaissent bien l'une l'autre, ce qui est finalement assez rare.

Un pays comme la France a signé d'autre part une dizaine d'accords d'échanges de publications officielles (P.O.), dont la gestion est confiée à la Bibliothèque nationale.Il est tout à fait possible d'envisager d'en signer d'autres avec tel pays dont la Bibliothèque nationale possède des séries de P.O. importantes pour la période coloniale et les années qui ont suivi l'indépendance. Bien que réputée avoir une politique d'échanges, notamment avec

l'Afrique, il apparait que la plupart des opérations faites ces dernières années sont plutôt des échanges "à bien plaire", comme on fait des ventes"à bien plaire", au coup par coup. La réunion de Nairobi devrait permettre de voir dans quelle mesure les bibliothécaires africains sont intéressés par la mise en place d'une politique vraiment cohérente d'échanges entre leurs bibliothèques et les bibliothèques françaises.

Dans l'ensemble les échanges sont considérés comme un mode d'acquisition sans grande importance, tant en qualité, qu'en quantité, et pourtant

| | Echanges en volume | en% /dons | en% /achats |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cote d'Ivoire(BN) | 1027 | 49% | 21% |
| Gabon (BN) | | 60% | 50% |
| Madagascar (BN) | 59 | 5% | 80% |
| Sénégal (BU Dakar) | | 10% | 5% |
| Togo (BU du Bénin) | 800 | | |
| Guinée équatoriale(BN) | | 100% | |
| Maroc ( BU Rabat droit) | | 150% | 15% |
| Tunisie (BN) | | 90M | 25% |

Les bibliothèques qui nous ont fourni des chiffres relativement importants laissent apparaitre que la fonction d'échanges pourrait être plus considérable partout ailleurs s'ils étaient mieux organisés et plus sûrs en qualité et en quantité.

D'un avis commun, ils devraient servir à l'amélioration des collections, tout en permettant de réaliser des économies à l'achat.

Toutes les bibliothèques pensent qu'ils sont le moyen de récupérer leurs produits culturels, édités à l'étranger, sous quelle que forme que ce soit, quand il existe un système de dépôt légal. Autres objectifs reconnus: compenser aux impossibilités d'acheter sur place, permettre l'acquisition de documents non commercialisés.

Au niveau des principes, il semble possible de mettre sur pied un système d'échanges avantageux tant pour nos correspondants africains que pour les bibliothèques françaises qui ont souvent du mal à obtenir les publications africaines qu'elles aimeraient conserver.

Selon les réponses à l'enquête , les bibliothèques qui entretiennent des échanges ne disposent pas de réseaux complexes à l'exception de la Bibliothèque nationale de Côte d'Ivoire, de la Bibliothèque nationale d'Alger, de celle de Tunis et des Bibliothèques universitaires de lettres de Rabat(Maroc) et de Tunis, cf. tableau ci-joint.

On constate une forte orientation vers les pays voisins et quelques pays européens de l'Est (URSS, Roumanie,RDA) et de l'Ouest (France, Grande-Bretagne,Belgique,RFA,Suède) auxquels s'ajoutent quelques pays anglo-saxons hors de l'Europe (USA, Canada,Australie). L'Amérique du sud (sauf Cuba), l'Extrême-Orient (sauf le Vietnam) ne sont pas signalés, comme d'ailleurs les pays méditerrannéens autres que la France et les pays du Maghreb.

Les accords d'échanges d'état à état sont rares mais ils existent au Bénin, en Cote d'Ivoire, aux Seychelles, en Guinée équatoriale, en Algérie et en Tunisie, au profit de leur bibliothèque nationale. Les accords de bibliothèque à bibliothèque semblent plus nombreux puisqu'il s'en trouve à la BN du Gabon, à Madagascar tant à la BN qu'à la BU, à la BU de Butare au Ruanda, à la BN du Togo, à celles de Tunis et d'Alger comme auprès des BU de droit de Tunis et de Rabat et celle de lettres de Tunis.

Ce sont surtout les publications en série qui font l'objet d'échanges mais deux ou trois bibliothèques mises à part, les monographies en font très normalement partie. Par contre les cartes et plans, les supports audiovisuels, les microformes et autres supports d'information en sont exclus sauf cas exceptionnel (microformes à Rabat BU/L, Thèses à la BU/médecine de Tunis, à la BU de Butare au Ruanda, ENS de Nouakchott en Maurétanie, cartes à la BU de Lomé au Togo).

Le potentiel d'échange est rarement constitué d'achats isolés

TABLEAU DES RESEAUX D'ECHANGES EXISTANT EN AFRIQUE FRANCOPHONE

| Bibliothèque | Pays voisins | Mada-gascar | Sénégal | Maghreb | C.Ivoire | France | GB | | URSS | USA | Canada | Cuba | Vietna |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Bénin (BU) | | | | | | BU | | | | | | | |
| Burundi (BU) | = | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Centrafricaine | BU) | | | | | | | | | L.o.c. | | | |
| Cote d'Ivoire (BN) | Nigéria (BN) | | | Tunisie (BN)(BU) | | BN | | BN Belgique Roumanie | BN | | BN | BN | BN |
| Gabon (BN) | Congo | | | Tunisie | | BN | | | BN | L.o.c. | | | |
| Ruanda (BU) | x | | | | | | BU(nb) | | | BU(nb) | | | |
| Sénégal (BU) | Fait des échanges avec 50 pays environ | | | | | BN | BLLD | | | L.o.c. | | | |
| Togo (BU) | x | BU | BU | Alger BU | | BU | | Belgique (BU) | | | | | |
| Madagascar (BN) | | | | Alger BN Tunis BN | | BN | | RDA(BN) Roumanie Albanie (BN) | BN | x | | BN | Chine pop.( |
| Madagascar(BU) | x | | x | Algérie | x | BN+BU | | RFA Suède | | x | | | |
| Algérie (BN) | x | Fait des échanges avec de nombreux paus, notamment le Maghreb et le Moyen Orient | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Tunisie (BN) | | Fait des échanges avec 50 pays environ | | | | | | | | | | | |
| BU/L Tunis | | | | | | BN | BLLD | et 360 BU dans le monde | | | | | |
| BU/Droit T | x | | | | | x | | Suisse | | | | | |
| BU/Méd.Tunis | | | | x | | BU méd | | | | | | | |
| BU/Méd.Sfax | | | | Alger BU | | BN+BU | | | | | | | |
| Maroc BU Fez | x | | | BU | | | | | | | | | |
| BU/Droit R | x | | | x | | x | | | | x | | | Iraq Ar.Sa |
| BU/L Rabat | x | | | | | BU | et avec | 40 BU dans le monde | | | | | |

(Burundi BU, BU de Butaré Rwanda, Seychelles BN, Togo BU, BU/L et Droit de Tunis, BU droit Rabat) ou même en masse (BN de Tananarive, d'Alger et de Tunis). Si le dépôt légal fournit une partie de la matière des échanges pour quelques bibliothèques nationales (Bénin, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Algérie), les subventions d'état représentent davantage en particulier pour certaines bibliothèques universitaires (Burundi, Ruanda, Sénégal) et quelques bibliothèques nationales (Alger, Tunis, Guinée équatoriale). En général chaque bibliothèque souhaite recevoir non seulement des imprimés mais aussi des documents iconographiques (cartes et plans, affiches, photos) et même sonores à l'exception de bibliothèques universitaires, bien qu'elles reconnaissent ne pas avoir le moyen de fournir de contrepartie pour ces types de documents.

Plusieurs bibliothèques demandent que leur soient fournies les thèses universitaires de tout niveau, qui sont susceptibles d'interesser leurs lecteurs ou qui touchent aux thèmes dont elles assument la couverture documentaire, que l'information soit portée sur un support original ou sur microforme. Cette question, qui relève des échanges universitaires, gérés en France par le Service des échanges universitaires (Bibliothèque de la Sorbonne, 17 rue de la Sorbonne, Paris, 75005) devrait être posée sous forme de recommandation à l'UNESCO.

/ Nota: De nombreuses universités européennes ou américaines ou soviétiques possèdent des documents en forme de thèses universitaires déposées par des ressortissants de pays en voie de développement. Ceux-ci sont en fait la propriété de l'auteur, une copie étant déposée, à titre de preuve, dans les archives de l'institution qui délivre le titre recherché par le candidat. L'université n'est donc pas propriéraire du texte, mais garante de l'existence de ce texte, qui n'appartient qu'à son auteur. Le problème posé est celui de la propriété intellectuelle des documents produits par les citoyens d'une communauté nationale, laquelle en revendique au moins l'usage. Certains états ont règlé la question en liant l'attribution de billets de retour au dépôt d'un exemplaire de thèse à l'ambassade. /

L'obtention ou la "récupération" de l'information scientifique et technique concernant leur pays touche l'ensemble des

*des bibliothèques puisque toutes demandent à recevoir la documentation en rapport avec leur pays, leur environnement géographique, culturel, politique, c'est-à-dire les "africana", et fournissent quantité de précisions, manifestant ainsi l'intérêt considérable qu'elles portent à cette question. Quelques bibliothèques nationales aimeraient recevoir en outre, dans le cadre de leurs échanges, des ouvrages et documents de valeur générale ou même encyclopédique. Les bibliothèques universitaires elles se cantonnent aux spécialités enseignées sur place, pour lesquelles elles désirent développer des collections cohérentes. Il existe cependant des limites à ces acquisitions: les documents doivent être dans une langue nationale(arabe, kinya, swahili ou bantou), ou bien dans une des langues occidentales suivantes, français et anglais, éventuellement en espagnol ou en allemand (4 cas); une seule bibliothèque semble être en état d'utiliser des ouvrages en russe (BU/Lettres de Rabat).*

*Les propositions d'échange se font de différentes manières, mais le plus souvent par des listes de notices bibliographiques plus ou moins complètes. Leur rédaction exige des moyens en personnel professionnel et crée un flux de correspondance abondant (envoi et retour), bien que le taux de non-réponse soit important, et d'un maniement assez fastidieux. Elles supposent le stockage des documents pendant toute la durée de la rédaction, de l'expédition et du retour, ce qui représente souvent un investissement assez lourd. C'est pourquoi il nous a semblé bon de vérifier les avantages de ces listes auprès de nos correspondants: elles sont, d'un avis unanime, au moins utiles, sinon indispensables. Une seule bibliothèque les trouvent difficiles à exploiter. Cependant les envois d'office sont accentés en général sous réserve de rester conformes aux objectifs (domaines couverts) de la bibliothèque. Cette méthode d'attribution "à la source" (équivalent à un "ordre permanent d'échange") a le mérite de la simplicité, parce qu'il élimine les problèmes de stockage, réduit les écritures, et permet la fourniture très rapide des objets de l'échange intéressés.*

Toutes les bibliothèques nationales, certaines bibliothèques universitaires aussi, aimeraient passer une convention d'échange, avec la Bibliothèque nationale de Paris, pour définir les quantités de documentsenvoyées et reçues de part et d'autre, tant publications officielles que documentation générale ou spécialisée. Si la chose se réalise avec un grand nombre de bibliothèque, le système des échanges français fonctionnerait essentiellement sur la base "d'ordres permanents d'échange" et la possibilité de mieux connaître ses interlocuteurs, dont nous cernons mal les besoins actuellement.

Pratiquement aucune des bibliothèques ne désire être un service national d'échange chargé des retransmissions, auquel il serait possible de faire parvenir ce qui est destiné à d'autres institutions de son pays. Par contre certaines aimeraient savoir ce que nous envoyons aux bibliothèques de leur territoire national.

Toute procédure d'échange suppose l'établissement de balances, ou état des comptes, au vu desquelles chaque service est amené à fournir davantage ou à refuser d'envoyer plus de documents. Pour les pays du Maghreb, les balances doivent être grosso modo égales, au moins en valeur intellectuelle, en répondant aux désirs ou aux besoins de chaque partie , l'équilibre "commercial", en nombre ou en valeur d'achat, étant secondaire. Dans les autres pays du continent africain, les bibliothèques considèrent que leur édition nationale ne peut soutenir la comparaison avec celle de pays développés comme la France, qui devrait accepter en conséquence d'envoyer sous forme d'échange plus en quantité et en valeur, qu'elle ne peut espérer recevoir de chaque pays. Comme leurs crédits d'acquisition sont souvent faibles, que le dépôt légal se fait avec plus ou moins de rigueur, elles n'ont pas les moyens de constituer un "trésor" ou réserves importantes pour leurs échanges.

*Les transports sont une source de dépenses pour tout service d'échange: il faut disposer d'emballages corrects, donc coûteux, éventuellement de machines de conditionnement. Enfin l'envoi outremer, par bâteau étant facturé par mètre cube, unité de base, qui est facturée quelle que soit la masse expédiée, est très onéreux. D'autre part les postes n'acceptent que les paquets de moins de 5 kg, ou dans certaines conditions des charges de moins de 20 kg, au tarif postal universel(environ 4FF du kilo en fret maritime, ou surface mail) . Les paquets postaux emportent l'assentiment de tous, car ils sont livrés à la bibliothèque même, sans intervention des douanes locales. Les colis de plus de 5 kg ne sont acceptés que par quatre bibliothèques universitaires (Bujumbura au Burundi, Tananarive à Madagascar et les deux BU du Ruanda), qui ne semblent pas avoir les problèmes de dédouanement que connaissent les autres. C'est sans doute la raison pour laquelle tous nos correspondants souhaitent que ces envois se fassent sous couvert du conseiller culturel français, à l'exception d'une seule bibliothèque. Par contre l'expédition via leur ambassade à Paris n'interesse que la BU du Bénin à Lomé et la Bibliothèque nationale d'Alger.*

*De leur côté nombre de bibliothèques ont des problèmes matériels pour faire leurs envois: (sur)coût des transports, des emballages, pas de local pour préparer les paquets, pas de budget pour ce type d'activités, comme à la Bibliothèque Nationale de Côte d'Ivoire ou plus simplement des difficultés pour collecter les documents. Si nos échanges devaient se développer, il faudra sans doute étudier les modalités matérielles du transport des documents(valises diplomatiques, subventions en nature sur les compagnies maritimes nationales, etc.) Comme les échanges sont une fonction peu importante, donc peu consommatrice de main d'oeuvre, seules quelques bibliothèques signalent qu'il existe dans dans ce domaine des problèmes de personnel (temps, formation).*

Cela n'empêche pas la plupart de nos correspondants de prévoir une augmentation des flux des échanges internationaux, selon des schémas très voisins de ceux qui sont déjà en place, (pays voisins et/ou de culture proche, l'Europe occidentale et l'URSS, les USA, quelques organismes internationaux comme l'ALECSO, l'ISESCO, etc.). En général ils se déclarent prêts à commencer/développer une (des) collection(s) spécialisée(s) avec l'aide du SEI.

Toutes sortes d'institutions ou de personnes physiques proposent à la Bibliothèque nationale de Paris ou au Service des échanges internationaux des collections d'ouvrages ou de publications en série, qui sont en fait des doubles et que nous pouvons proposer à qui pourrait en avoir besoin. Cette idée agrée à toutes les bibliothèques qui ont répondu, non seulement pour combler les manques, mais aussi pour constituer de nouvelles collections. Des listes de doubles sont demandées, lesquelles sont longues à établir, il faut le rappeler, mais il semble possible d'obtenir de chaque bibliothèque des fiches de lacune, titre par titre, ce qui nous donne le moyen d'expédier vers des demandeurs connus les doubles, dès leur arrivée en magasin ou mieux dès qu'ils nous sont offerts, encore sur les rayons de la bibliothèque qui les met à notre disposition. Plus de la moitié des bibliothèques accepterait même des envois d'office de doubles et certaines y poussent dans les domaines qu'elles signalent. Elles-mêmes possèdent des doubles de l'édition locale, plus rarement d'origine étrangère, qu'elles peuvent envoyer à la demande, mais plus rarement faire connaître sur liste. Si quelques unes ont les moyens de produire des microformes, normalement les copies sont des photocopies. Les réenrégistrements sonores sont possibles au CNDRS des Comores, aux Bibliothèques nationales de Côte d'Ivoire, du Gabon et d'Algérie et à l'Ecole normale supérieure de Nouakchott en Mauritanie.

*Le patrimoine*

*Grâce au développement récent des techniques de reproduction des documents, il est permis d'envisager la création de collections de textes, d'images ou d'enrégistrements sonores,anciens ou non, dont l'intérêt documentaire demeure, mais qui sont difficiles à trouver sur le marché et que l'on peut reprendre sur d'autres supports dans la mesure où ils sont conservés dans des bibliothèques publiques. D'autre part comme chaque paus est amené à collecter pour sa(ses) bibliothèque(s) de conservation les documents ou copies de documents qui intéressent son histoire, son environnement naturel, culturel et technique , la Bibliothèque nationale en collaboration avec le Ministère des Relations extérieures , se propose de faire reproduire tant en France (notamment à la B.N.) qu'en Afrique les collections anciennes susceptibles d'intéresser les chercheurs des différents pays, dans le cadre d'accords de coopération.*

*Généralement c'est la Bibliothèque nationale qui assure localement le rôle de bibliothèque de conservation du "patrimoine national" enrégistré, mais ce peut être une bibliothèque universitaire, en attendant la création d'une bibliothèque nationale (BU de Bujumbura au Burundi, BU du Ruanda, BU de Dakar au Sénégal, BU/Lettres de Fez), les Archives Nationales (République Centrafricaine, Sénégal, Mauritanie) ou même des bibliothèques de sociétés savantes (Académie malgache à Tananarive).Elles se se plaignent toutes de manquer de personnel, d'avoir trop peu de crédits et de n'avoir pas assez d'informations bibliographiques, ce qui explique sans doute que très peu d'entre elles soient capables d'identifier les collections françaises susceptibles de leur fournir des copies recherchées. Il existe des enquêtes bibliographiques ou des bibliographies rétrospectives donnant descriptions de ces collections au Burundi (datant de 1982, mais incomplète), au Gabon, aux Seychelles, au Togo (1971,1979 et incomplète), en Cote d'Ivoire (fichier à la BU, prêt pour la publication), une liste des journaux tunisiens depuis l'origine. La Bibliothèque nationale d'Alger pense exploiter*

le catalogue de la Série L du fonds de la Bibliothèque nationale de Paris (Histoire de France, la sous-série Lk9 regroupant les documents sur l'Algérie). Les fonds africains de la Bibliothèque nationale étant désormais catalogués, grâce à Paulette Lordereau, qui est chargée de leur développement, les bibliothécaires africains disposeront sous peu d'un instrument de travail important puisque la majeure partie des fonds africains en France se trouvent là.

Sans ces instruments , il serait impossible de reproduire les titres utiles. Toutes les bibliothèques sont prêtes à recevoir des copies (photocopies, microformes, réenrégistrement), bien que certainesrevendiquent des ouvrages sur papier, quand ils sont disponnibles, parce que plus faciles à conserver.

Quelques unes d'entre elles usent déjà du prêt interbibliothèque pour supléer à leurs lacunes dans le domaine du patrimoine culturel (BU de Bujumbura, BN de Cote d'Ivoire, BU de Tananarive, de Dakar, du Bénin à Lomé, ENS de Nouakchott).Espérons que tous les pays arriveront à mettre sur pied les équipes nécessaires pour faire ce repérage bibliographique, qui sera publié pour le plus grand profit des chercheurs, ce qui signifie que chaque pays ait défini ce qui relève de son patrimoine culturel. Plusieurs bibliothèques se déclarent capables de recruter des vacataires et même des chercheurs pour établir des listes bibliographiques avec localisation des documents touchant à leur patrimoine (BU de Bujumbura, BU en République Centrafricaine, BN du Gabon, BU de Dakar, Lomé, BN d'Alger, ENS de Maurétanie).

Enfin la Bibliothèque nationale de Paris pouvant disposer très rapidement, grâce au dépôt légal, des documents produits par l'édition française, nous nous proposons d'utiliser, comme base d'échange avec les bibliothèques qui sont, dans chaque pays , chargées de la conservation du patrimoine national les monographies et publications en série s'y rapportant par le sujet ou l'auteur. Pour appliquer un tel "ordre permanent d'échange" il nous faut disposer d'une liste correcte des domaines considérés par chaquebibliothèque comme relevant de son patrimoine du point de vue culturel, géographique, ethnique, linguistique, technique, ainsi que la liste des auteurs nationaux anciens et contemporains.

Cette liste peut nous être fournie pour le Burundi, la République Centrafricaine, la Côte d'Ivoire,, le Gabon, Madagascar, le Sénégal, les Seychelles, l'Algérie et partiellement pour le Maroc et les Comores, mais aucune des bibliothèques interrogées, à l'exception des bibliothèques nationales de Côte d'Ivoire et du Gabon, ne peut nous donner une évaluation même approximative de la masse des documents parus en 1982 et 1983 en France, dont elles auraient souhaité l'attribution automatique.
Plusieurs bibliothèques sont prêtes à mettre à notre disposition les instruments bibliographiques créés par leurs soins, tous en forme de fichiers ou de listes imprimées mais jamais informatisés.

---

En conclusion, il apparaît que toutes les bibliothèques souhaitent accroître leurs échanges. Elles désirent obtenir plus de documents, mieux adaptés à leurs collections, gardant l'initiative du choix, en pointant sur des listes de propositions. D'autre part elles reconnaissent que leurs moyens sont limités, que leurs échanges ne les ont guère satisfaites jusqu'à présent, ce qui devrait normalement les amener à se méfier des échanges internationaux et ne pas croire en leur possible développement.
C'est pourquoi il semble raisonnable d'offrir la possibilité de rationaliser le choix des objets de l'échange et les procédures elles-mêmes afin de mieux satisfaire nos correspondants et de redonner aux échanges internationaux leur fonction ancienne, diffuser auprès des institutions de recherche les outils intellectuels produits dans un pays et utiles dans un autre. Toute offre suppose une réponse, c'était la raison de cette enquête: les bibliothèques africaines contactées ont exprimé un désir semblable. Il faut espérer que les échanges internationaux se développeront réellement ces prochaines années à la satisfaction de toutes les parties.